



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

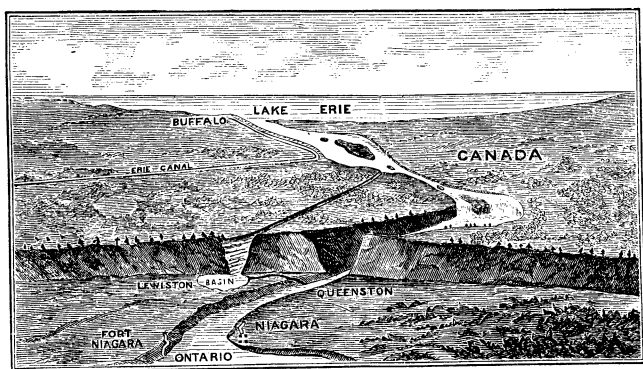
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

# PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

NATIONAL

## Commercial Convention



(Perspective of proposed Canal and vicinity.)

TO CONSIDER THE QUESTION OF

### Increased Transportation Facilities

FROM THE WEST TO THE SEABOARD,

*Held in Detroit, December 13, 1871.*

— • • —

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE CONVENTION.

— • • —

DETROIT:

DAILY POST BOOK AND JOB PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT.

1872.



PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
NATIONAL  
COMMERCIAL CONVENTION

TO CONSIDER THE QUESTION OF  
INCREASED TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES  
FROM THE  
WEST TO THE SEABOARD,

Held in Detroit, December 15th, 1871.

---

Published by Order of the Convention.

---

DETROIT:  
THE DAILY POST BOOK AND JOB PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT.

1872.



## HISTORY OF THE CONVENTION.

---

At its session in 1870, the legislature of the State of Iowa took action favoring the speedy establishment of uninterrupted water communication between the Mississippi Valley and the Atlantic Seaboard, and invited the co-operation of the legislatures and people of the country, and more especially of the Western and Northern States, in this work. The legislatures of several other States, more especially Wisconsin and Minnesota, have also repeatedly called the attention of the country to the imperative importance and necessity of making an effort to secure cheap transportation between the Mississippi Valley and the Atlantic Seaboard, by opening up continuous water and steam transportation between the two sections, and more especially from the foot of Lake Erie around the Falls of Niagara, on the American side; and have earnestly and persistently urged the people of the whole country to take measures to secure the opening of that route at the earliest practicable period.

In pursuance of such recommendations, the following named movement, to secure the assembling of a Convention at Detroit, was inaugurated:

At a meeting of the Board of Trade of the City of Dubuque, Iowa, held May 20th, 1871, the following resolutions, reported by a committee previously appointed on the subject, were unanimously adopted:

*“Resolved,* That Congress be requested to make an adequate appropriation for the construction of a Canal around the Falls of Niagara, on the American side, equal to the maximum capacity of the Lakes, upon such terms and conditions as shall secure the opening up of the whole route, by private capital and enterprise, to an equal capacity, to the Atlantic Ocean, by the way of Lake Ontario, River St. Lawrence Lake Champlain and Hudson River; and upon the further condition that the Government of the United States shall have the control of the whole route, so as to regulate the rates of toll thereon; and also have the right and power to purchase the whole work, after a limited number of years, to be named in the law making the appropriation, and thereby make the same free to the commerce of the country.

*“Resolved,* That this Board would suggest and recommend that a Convention of Delegates from the States more directly and immediately interested therein, be called to meet at Detroit, in the State of Michigan, on Wednesday, the 23d day of November next, to take into consideration exclusively the foregoing proposition of water transportation on the route herein set forth; that the Governors of the States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Dakota Territory, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and the New England States, be requested to unite in the call of said Convention; that they, and the Governors, Ex-Governors and Governors elect of all other States, Members and Ex-Members of Congress, Members of State Legislatures, Mayors of Cities, Presidents of unincorporated Towns, Presidents of Boards of Trade, Chambers of Commerce, and other like bodies, and Editors of all newspapers, be cordially invited and requested to attend said Convention, as *ex-officio* members thereof, and that the Governors of the above named, and all other States whose people are interested in cheap transportation, Mayors of Cities, Presidents of unincorporated Towns, and Presidents of Boards of Trade, and Chambers of Commerce appoint such additional Delegates thereto as they shall deem advisable, provided, that State Delegates shall not exceed the whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress therefrom. Delegates from Cities shall be restricted to three, and from Boards of Trade to six. That the Convention be restricted in its action, proceedings, and labors to measures which shall tend to the opening up of the above named water route; and that the foregoing propositions be submitted to Boards of Trade, City Councils, and other constituent and commercial bodies, for their consideration and concurrence.

*“Resolved,* That the Governor of the State of Michigan, President of the Board of Trade, and Mayor of the City of Detroit, and John Burt, Esq., of Detroit, and such other persons as they may call to their assistance, be invited and requested to act as an Executive Committee, one part of whose duty shall be to invite distinguished citizens, and others, to attend said Convention and participate in its proceedings, who may

not be included in the general invitation herein extended, or who, from any other cause, might not attend, and to take such other measures as they may deem necessary to promote the efficiency and success of said Convention."

Attest with the seal of said Board attached, this 20th day of May, 1871.

T. L. BOWMAN, *Secretary*.

By L. A. THOMAS, *Secretary pro tem*.

In accordance with the resolution last above given, James Burt, Wm. I. Gilchrist, R. J. Gibbs, Dr. G. W. Scott, A. C. Call, M. Kingman, of Iowa; D. W. Ingersoll, of Minnesota; F. H. West, Wm. W. Jones, of Wisconsin; W. W. Wheaton, C. M. Garrison and John Burt, of Michigan, were constituted an Executive Committee, with Lewis A. Thomas, of Iowa, as Secretary, to call a Convention at Detroit, as suggested. The Committee sent the above resolutions to the Governors of several States, and the following, among many favorable responses, was received:

EXECUTIVE OFFICE,  
DES MOINES, IOWA, October 4th, 1871. }

COL. L. A. THOMAS, Dubuque county;

DEAR SIR: I have received yours of September 30th, together with resolutions, and printed circulars entitled, "A call for a Commercial Convention of the people and business men of the country, to devise ways and means for opening up continuous and uninterrupted water and steam navigation from the Mississippi Valley to the Atlantic Ocean."

I most cheerfully join the Governors of the East and West in this call, which I have signed and herewith returned to you.

I regard this effort, by the friends and advocates of cheap transportation between the East and the West, to open up continuous water and steam navigation of maximum capacity from the Mississippi Valley to the Atlantic Ocean, as the most important enterprise of its character that has ever been brought before the American people. *The West must have cheap transportation to the East and to Europe, or her continued development and consequent prosperity will be materially retarded.*

Even now we begin to see unmistakable signs of such a crisis. At this very hour, in the interior and all the western portions of Iowa, and all of Nebraska and Dakota, the products of the farm, after deducting interest on capital invested, expenses, &c., will make the agriculturist only a meager return for his labor in raising them. Never before has



Iowa had such a crop of corn, wheat, and other products of the earth, as that of this year. Yet of this immense production, little or none can be shipped, except wheat and pork; and the prices for these articles rule so low that the expense of getting them to market consumes the greater part of the whole crop. This, it will be readily seen, cannot long continue without producing utter prostration of our agricultural interests. For this state of affairs a partial, if not a full, remedy can be found in cheapened transportation; something that will materially reduce the expense of getting this wealth of field and stock to market. Railroads cannot meet this requirement. More than eighteen months ago, a leading Northwestern journal stated that the West "even now is at the end of its transit ability. Not another ton of freight can be removed from the West to the East with its present means and facilities of transportation, immense as they confessedly are." If this was true at that time (and I have not the slightest doubt of it), how much more emphatically is it the case at the present day; the facilities of transportation, thus fully occupied then, have not been increased; yet the population of the West has in that period of time been augmented by nearly, if not quite, a million of people, nine-tenths of whom are agriculturists, who by their industry and energy are adding immensely to her agricultural products, even while the fruits of their labor yield them little more than a bare living. And no amount of probable increase of railroad facilities will be adequate for the demand.

The advocates of the contemplated water route affirm (and I fully concur with them) that it is the only agent by which we can bring about cheap transportation, and draw producer and consumer together, as well as open up new markets in Europe, now closed to us because of the cost of reaching them. The friends of reform therefore urge enlightened, energetic, and representative men, in all parts of the country, to come up to this Convention, and aid in devising means and inaugurating measures to facilitate this great work, demanded by the interests of the East and the West. Cheapened transportation across the continent means cheap food for the seaboard, and cheaper merchandise for the West. Thus, farmer, merchant, mechanic, laborer, East and West, will for all time be benefited.

Respectfully yours,

SAMUEL MERRILL,  
*Governor of Iowa.*

Subsequently the following call was issued :

## A GREAT CONTINENTAL ENTERPRISE.

---

### Continuous Steam Navigation from the Mississippi Valley to the Atlantic Ocean.

---

WHEREAS, Resolutions have been adopted by Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Trade, City Councils, and public meetings and other bodies in most of the principal cities and commercial centers in the Northern and Western States, calling for a Commercial Convention to take into consideration the foregoing proposition, which resolutions are all in substance as follows, to wit :

*“Resolved,* That the business men in all parts of the country interested in cheap transportation between the West and East, be invited and requested to meet in Convention at Detroit, in the State of Michigan, some time this autumn, to devise ways and means of opening up, at the earliest practicable period, a continuous water and steam navigation route, of maximum capacity, from the Mississippi Valley, around the Falls of Niagara on the American side, thence by the way of Lake Ontario and River St. Lawrence, Lake Champlain and Hudson River to the Atlantic Ocean, by the nearest, cheapest and best route ; also to petition Congress to assist in the consummation of this Great Continental as well as National Enterprise, by making an appropriation adequate to the construction of the works at Niagara Falls ; also as to the expediency of proposing to Congress, that such assistance be granted upon the following terms and conditions, to wit :

1. “That Congress shall thereby secure control of all the works along the proposed line to the sea coast, so as forever to regulate the rates of toll and transportation thereon, as also to keep the same open to navigation.

2. “That Congress shall also thereby have the power and right (after a limited term of years, to be fixed in the law making the appropriation) to purchase all of such works through to the Atlantic Ocean, and thus make the whole route practically free to the Commerce of the country.

“That the Convention be restricted in its proceedings and resolutions exclusively to measures for the promotion and success of this enterprise, and that it petition Congress to legislate thereon separate and apart from all other questions and measures.

“That Governors, Ex-Governors, and Governors elect, of all the States, and especially of the Eastern, Western and Northwestern States, Members and Ex-Members of Congress, Members of State Legislatures,

Mayors of Cities, Presidents of Towns and Villages, Presidents of Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce, and like organizations, be requested to appoint such additional delegates thereto as they may deem proper and necessary, not, however, to exceed the following ratio, to wit:

“State Delegates not to exceed the whole number of Senators and Representatives from such State or Territory; three from each City or Town, and six from each Board of Trade, Chamber of Commerce, or like organization.”

Resolutions (all of which are substantially embodied in the foregoing) have been unanimously adopted by the following civil and commercial bodies and public meetings of the people in various and distant parts of the country, to wit:

#### STATE OF IOWA

Board of Trade and City Council of the City of Dubuque, June 1st, 1871.  
Board of Supervisors of the County of Dubuque, June 5th.  
City Council and public meeting of McGregor, July 20th.  
City Council of Lansing, July 21st.

#### STATE OF WISCONSIN.

City Council and Board of Trade of LaCrosse, July 25th.  
Chamber of Commerce of Milwaukee, September 20th.

#### STATE OF MINNESOTA.

City Council of Winona, July 24th.  
City Council and Board of Trade of Redwing, July 27th.  
City Council of Hastings, July 28th.  
Board of Trade of St Paul, August 7th.  
City Council, Board of Trade and Lumbermen's Board of Trade of St. Croix Valley, Stillwater, August 4th.  
Board of Trade of Minneapolis and St. Anthony, August 3d, and City Council of Minneapolis, August 10th.  
City Council and Board of Trade of Duluth, August 9th.

#### STATE OF NEW YORK.

Public meeting and President and Trustees of Lewiston, August 18th.  
Public meeting and President and Trustees of Youngstown, August 19th.

#### STATE OF VERMONT.

President and Trustees of St. Albans, August 25th.  
Public meeting, Mayor and City Council and Board of Trade of Burlington, August 28th.

#### STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.

City Council of Concord, September 6th.

#### STATE OF MAINE.

Board of Trade of Portland, September 6th.

**STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS.**

Boston Commercial Exchange, September 8th.

**STATE OF MICHIGAN.**

Board of Trade of Detroit, September 15th.

**STATE OF ILLINOIS.**

Chamber of Commerce of Chicago, September 19th.

AND WHEREAS, The Governors of a large portion of the Northern States have united in said call, whilst others have signified their approval of said Convention and pledged their co-operation therein. Now, therefore, in view of the vast importance of the contemplated improvement to the continued development and consequent prosperity of the agricultural, manufacturing and commercial interests of the whole country, and being called for by so large a majority of the principal commercial centers of the country, and more especially of the Northern States, notice is hereby given that a COMMERCIAL CONVENTION will be held at Detroit, in the State of Michigan, on Wednesday, the 29th day of November, 1871, for the purpose expressed and upon the basis and ratio of representation set forth in the foregoing resolution.

The friends and promoters of this enterprise would most earnestly recommend and request that the magistrates and other official persons named in said resolutions, will appoint delegates (who will attend) to said Convention, in accordance with the recommendation and provisions therein contained, that not only the cities, villages, towns and centers of commerce, but the whole Northern portion of our country, whose people are interested in the great problem of Cheap Transportation between the East and West, will be represented in the Convention; and more especially, those who, by said resolution, have been cordially invited to attend the same as *ex officio* members thereof, will turn out in strong force.

The effort to open up continuous steam navigation of large capacity between the Mississippi Valley and the Atlantic Seaboard is a gigantic enterprise, well worthy the combined and vigorous efforts of a free, prosperous and enterprising people. It will however, tax the energies of our whole people; not one effort or influence should or can safely be omitted in this grand movement, in the onward progress of our national development and material prosperity. In no other way, however, can the vast and rapidly increasing agricultural, manufacturing and commercial interests of the whole country be adequately and efficiently subserved. Let us, therefore, make one more grand and united effort to consummate this great continental as well as national enterprise. Judg-

ing the future by the past, we have the strongest assurance that our efforts will be crowned with the most triumphant success.

By order of the Executive Committee,

IOWA—JAMES BURT, WM. I. GILCHRIST, R. J. GIBBS,  
DR. G. W. SCOTT, A. C. CALL, M. KINGMAN.

MINNESOTA—D. W. INGERSOLL.

WISCONSIN—F. H. WEST, WM. W. JONES.

MICHIGAN—W. W. WHEATON, C. M. GARRISON, JOHN BURT.

*Executive Committee.*

LEWIS A. THOMAS,

*Corresponding Secretary.*

Dubuque, October 18th, 1871.

The date of the holding of the Convention was subsequently changed to Wednesday, December 13th, 1871, when, in pursuance of the above call, the Convention assembled in the Board of Trade Building in the City of Detroit.

# NATIONAL COMMERCIAL CONVENTION.

December 13th, 1871.

The Convention was called to order at 11 o'clock A. M. by Mr. Lewis A. Thomas, of Dubuque, Iowa, Corresponding Secretary of the Executive Committee, as follows :

We are assembled here from different parts of the country to deliberate upon one of the most important questions that is now, or probably, ever will come, before the American people. We are here from the East and the West, and from the center of this great country, for the purpose of devising ways and means by which we can facilitate transportation between the two sections of the country ; and I am rejoiced to see representative men from the far East and from the far West, from the center, and almost from the circumference, of the Union. It shows there is a deep-seated and determined purpose among the people. There are representatives here from at least twenty millions. There are fifteen millions of people residing west of the Lakes and north of the Ohio River who are represented here, and that people speak with one voice. Every man, woman and child of that people have decided and determined that the West must have increased means of transportation.

The State which I in part represent on this floor--and I do not mention it by way of boast, by any means, but I state it as a matter of fact--is the greatest agricultural State in the Union. In the three great staples of wheat, corn and pork, Iowa produces a larger aggregate than any other State in the Union, and yet a large proportion, a sixth of our State, is still a buffalo range. That State is overflowing with agricultural products. I was detained on my way to St. Louis, a few days ago, at a point called Acton. While there one man stated to me that he had 700 fat hogs that would dress upon an average 300 pounds, and all that he could get for that immense production was \$3.25 per hundred. I inquired of him what the prospects were for the agricultural interests of the West, and he said they were never so gloomy as now ; and he told me he could see no ray of hope. I did—I saw it in precisely this enter-

prise which we are now attempting to organize—cheap transportation between the East and the West. (Applause.) I will not detain you any longer, at present; but, that there may be an organization of this Convention, I respectfully call for the nomination of a temporary Chairman.

On motion of Mr. Geo. I. Post, of Fairhaven, N. Y., Henry P. Baldwin, Governor of Michigan, was elected temporary Chairman; and at his request, Bishop McCoskry, of Michigan, opened the proceedings with prayer.

#### PRAYER OF BISHOP MCCOSKRY.

Merciful God, we would bow before Thee with the deepest reverence and humility, remembering that Thou art in Heaven and we upon earth. Thou art holy, and we are sinful; yet we would come to Thee with all the confidence of children to a father. Thou hast revealed Thyself in Thy Dear Son, not only as a God, but as a Father—one who watches over us, and who has given the highest evidence of his love in sending His Son into the world to redeem us from sin and to purify our hearts, and make us fit for serving Thee and dwelling with Thee hereafter. Oh! Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for this gift, that Thou hast made this known to us through Him in all the lovely attributes which draw our hearts to Thee as a Father of patience, of kindness, of mercy, of forgiveness. We thank Thee that Thou hast given us a rule of life, that Thy Dear Son hast revealed to us the Gospel, the foundation of all our hopes in time and for eternity, without which gross darkness would cover us; without which we would this day be bowing down to gods of our own forming; without which we would have no homes, no social intercourse, no business relations, but we would be wanderers on the face of the earth. Great God, may these considerations impress us deeply. May we be grateful to Thee for these blessings. And, Oh God, we thank Thee for all the blessings we have received, that through the Gospel and through the influences brought to bear upon us we can assemble to-day from all parts of the land to devise ways and means for our own comfort and for the comfort of those who are to come after us, and to relieve both the poor and the rich.

O God, bless this assembly; make them to come to Thee with a single desire, not only to enrich themselves, but to be agents in Thy hands of opening new and rapid means whereby Thy Gospel may be spread, Thy truth may have its influence, and all our people be bound in yet stronger bonds of union and Christian love. May everything be done with an eye single to Thy glory, remembering that whatever we have to make us rich we owe to Thee. May we never forget ourselves; and if reverses come and poverty, may we never forget our Father and

our God. Bless us in all our duties of life, and in all its perils and its changes make our hearts ready to receive the benefits of Thy sustaining grace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

#### ADDRESS OF WELCOME.

After the conclusion of the prayer, Governor Baldwin delivered the following address of welcome :

GENTLEMEN OF THE CONVENTION : It is a pleasure to me to welcome you to our city and our State. The time was when Detroit and Michigan were looked upon as afar off towards the setting sun, at the far West, but that time has passed away forever.

Our city and State, where you are now assembled, may be classed as occupying an important position, as the gateway between the great East and the great and growing West.

We live in an age and in a country of progress. Less than a century—or three generations of men—has passed away, since the Government under which we live was organized. During this period we have not been exempt from the common lot of nations ; several times engaged in open conflict with other nations, and but very recently in a prolonged internal strife, such as has never before befallen a civilized people. An overruling Providence has been with us ; so that we have not only successfully maintained a republican government, but have steadily gone forward, deepening the foundations and strengthening the principles of a government from the people and for the people, under which the country has grown and prospered as has no other country upon the face of the globe.

During the first seventy years of our history as an independent government, from 1790 to 1860, the increase of the population of the country was about 35 per cent. for each of the seven decades ; and during the last ten years, notwithstanding the four years of civil war, the population was augmented 22 per cent.. So steady and so marked has been the progress of the United States, that the peoples and the governments of the old world far beyond the Atlantic, look at its rapid development and growth, with wonder and amazement ; while they see in us the youngest of the family of nations, they cannot but assign to the Government of the United States the foremost rank of influence, position and power.

The completion of the Erie Canal, in 1825, providing water communication from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic, was the beginning of a new era in the history and advancement of our country ; up to that period the Great West was almost an unknown land.

Although a small steamer appeared on the upper lakes as early as 1819, the first steamer was seen on Lake Michigan in 1826, the year after the opening of the Erie Canal, but it was not until 1832 that a steamer visited Chicago.



Just thirty years after the completion of the Erie Canal another great National work was completed, the St. Mary's Falls Ship Canal, furnishing a most important highway from the northwest to the lower lakes; so great has been the growth of the commerce of Lake Superior, and so wonderful is its promise for the future, that the capacity of this Canal is at the present time being doubled.

It is quite unnecessary at this time to attempt to notice in detail the wonderful increase of population and products, in that portion of the west which finds its natural outlet to the sea-board by way of the Lakes.

The entire population of the vast extent of territory now embraced within the thirteen States and eight territories, west of the 31st degree of west longitude, and north of the 36th degree of north latitude, in 1830, was but 1,610,473; the same territory had in 1870 a population of 13,867,861, an increase of 806 per cent., while the remaining portion of the Union increased but 202 per cent.

When we scan the past, and bring to mind the hardships and self-denials of the early settlers, the obstacles overcome by them, the want of facilities and the heavy cost in reaching a market for their products, then, turning to the present, behold on every hand railroads, stretching out their iron arms in every direction, traversing the continent to the Pacific coast, and, not content with present advantages, observe the construction, with accelerated pace, of new lines north and south, east and west, to the limits of the continent, we may safely assert that the development of this vast region has just begun.

The want of adequate facilities for reaching the sea-board with the products of the West, is already felt to a very serious extent, and perhaps no other one thing will have so important a bearing upon the future of the Northwest as that of providing reliable, cheap steam transportation to the Atlantic coast.

That the rapid growth of the population and products of the Northwest, and the consequent increase of the commerce of the lakes, will sooner or later render the construction of a ship-canal of large capacity, around the falls of Niagara, on the American side, a necessity, would seem to admit of little doubt.

To consider and devise the best means of supplying adequate cheap steam transportation to the Atlantic, has brought you together.

The subject is one of vital importance, and may well demand the most earnest, the most elaborate, and the wisest counsels of thoughtful minds.

I trust that the deliberations and discussions of this convention will so awaken the public mind to its importance, as to result in the accomplishment of the end so necessary for the future prosperity of our country.

H. M. Utley, of Detroit, was appointed temporary Secretary.

## CREDENTIALS AND DELEGATES.

The following were appointed a Committee on Credentials :

Col. Robinson, of Wisconsin ; Gen. Buckland, of Ohio ; and Messrs. Brown, of Minnesota ; Hersey, of Maine ; Lewis, of Michigan ; Gilchrist, of Iowa ; Post, of New York, and Benedict, of Vermont.

This Committee subsequently reported the following delegates as entitled to seats in the Convention :

IOWA—James Burt, W. I. Gilchrist, B. B. Richards, Alex. Levy, L. A. Thomas, J. R. Graves, Solomon Turk, John P. Irish, Col. Saunders, W. I. Abernethy, A. C. Call.

MINNESOTA—Gen. H. H. Sibley, D. W. Ingersoll, S. S. Murdock, John P. Brown, N. W. S. Drew.

OHIO—W. T. Walker, V. H. Ketchum, C. Waggoner, C. A. King, F. J. King, R. W. Baker, R. P. Buckland, J. W. Scott, J. R. Osborn, A. E. Macomber, George Milmine, J. W. Cummings.

MAINE—T. C. Hersey, Charles Clark.

MICHIGAN—Gov. H. P. Baldwin, James F. Joy, G. V. N. Lothrop, C. H. Buhl, Duncan Stewart, Alex. Lewis, G. W. Bissell, Jacob Beeson, John Hosmer, Traugott Schmidt, T. D. Hawley, George F. Bagley, William Foxen, William Wilmot, C. M. Garrison, W. W. Wheaton, John Burt, W. H. Baxter, W. C. Hoyt, P. J. D. VanDyke, J. S. Farrand, Gen. O. M. Poe, C. C. Trowbridge, H. J. Redfield, A. C. F. Beck, Chas. Toll, Thos. Doyle, J. M. Sterling.

VERMONT—Leonard Chase, G. G. Benedict.

NEW YORK—Wm. Hotchkiss, Jeremiah Odell, Thos. M. Griffith, Arthur Gray, Oliver P. Scoville, Joseph M. Morrell, George I. Post, Sam'l Colt, A. G. Liscom, S. Park Baker, W. H. Doyle, Luke P. Babcock, D. G. Fort, S. I. Pomeroy.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA—J. H. Gray.

ILLINOIS—Col. D. C. Houston.

NEW HAMPSHIRE—A. C. Jones.

WISCONSIN—Gov. Lucius Fairchild, Col. Charles D. Robinson, Hon. W. W. Field, P. V. Deuster, Anton Klaus, George Hoskinson, Capt. John Nader, Hon. W. W. Corning.

## COMMITTEES APPOINTED.

On motion of William Wilmot, of Michigan, the following were appointed a Committee on Permanent Organization :

C. Waggoner, of Ohio ; W. I. Abernethy, of Iowa ; N. W. S. Drew, of

Minnesota ; Charles Clark, of Maine ; Wm. Hotchkiss, of New York ; W. W. Field, of Wisconsin ; J. H. Gray, District of Columbia ; L. Chase, of Vermont.

On motion of Gen. Sibley, of Minnesota, the following Committee was appointed to report rules and order of business for the Convention :

J. S. Farrand, Michigan ; B. B. Richards, Iowa ; S. P. Parker, New York ; V. H. Ketchum, Ohio ; S. S. Murdock, Minnesota.

On motion of L. A. Thomas, of Iowa, the following committee was appointed to draft a memorial to Congress, and also resolutions upon the subject for which the convention was called :

Gen. Sibley and D. W. Ingersoll, of Minnesota ; W. J. Gilchrist and L. A. Thomas, of Iowa ; D. C. Houston, Illinois ; C. C. Trowbridge and Gen. O. M. Poe, Michigan ; C. A. King and W. T. Walker, Ohio ; G. I. Post and D. G. Fort, New York ; J. H. Gray, District of Columbia ; L. Chase and G. G. Benedict, Vermont ; A. C. Jones, New Hampshire ; P. V. Deuster and Geo. Hoskinson, Wisconsin.

#### INVITATION.

At this stage of the proceedings it was announced that Hon. John Young, of Montreal, President of the Dominion Board of Trade, was in the city ; and on motion of G. V. N. Lothrop, he was invited to a seat as delegate ; and Gov. Baldwin and Hon. C. C. Trowbridge, of Michigan, and Gov. Fairchild, of Wisconsin, were appointed a committee to wait upon him and ask him to address the Convention this afternoon.

#### RETIREMENT.

Gov. Baldwin here announced that business of an urgent character called him out of the city, and that he must leave during the afternoon. He said that he regretted his inability to remain in the city and take part in considering the important questions that the Convention had been called together to act upon.

The Convention then adjourned until 3 P. M.

## AFTERNOON SESSION.

The Convention re-assembled pursuant to adjournment, at 3 P. M.

## PERMANENT OFFICERS.

Mr. G. V. N. Lothrop, from the Committee on Permanent Organization, reported the following officers :

PRESIDENT—Gov. LUCIUS FAIRCHILD, of Wisconsin.

VICE PRESIDENTS—T. C. HERSEY, of Maine ; G. G. BENEDICT, of Vermont ; WM. HOTCHKISS, of New York ; R. P. BUCKLAND, of Ohio ; JAS. F. JOY, of Michigan ; W. W. CORNING, of Wisconsin ; LEWIS A. THOMAS, of Iowa ; D. W. INGERSOLL, of Minnesota.

SECRETARIES—WM. WILMOT, of Michigan ; J. POTTS BROWN, of Iowa.

The report was accepted and adopted.

## ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT.

Gov. Fairchild, of Wisconsin, then took the chair, and spoke as follows :

GENTLEMEN OF THE CONVENTION—No one can appreciate more highly than I do the honor conferred upon me, being conferred by gentlemen representing so large a portion of the United States, and by so many gentlemen that I see around me older in years and older in experience. Nevertheless I accept the position, and will serve you to the very best of my ability. I will not detain you with any extended remarks now, as I know quite a number of delegates in attendance upon this Convention desire to finish up the business before it, that they may, if possible, leave on the evening train for their homes.

## BUSINESS FOR THE CONVENTION.

Mr. Jacob S. Farrand, of Michigan, from the Committee on Rules of Order and Business, submitted the following :

- 1st. Reception of the Report of the Committee on Permanent Organization ; and, after that is disposed of and the officers chosen :
- 2d. The appointment of Standing Committees.
- 3d. Reception of the Report of the Committee on Memorial to Congress and Resolutions.

- 4th. That the daily sessions be from 9 to 12 A. M. and from 2 to 6 P. M., and if evening sessions are held, from 7 to 10 o'clock.
- 5th. That the first business of each session shall be the reports of Standing Committees.
- 6th. The reception of Resolutions.
- 7th. That the discussions be confined to the subjects mentioned in the call for the Convention.

The report was accepted and adopted.

#### CANADIAN VISITORS.

Gov. Baldwin, from the committee appointed to invite Hon. John Young, of Montreal, to meet with the convention, came forward and introduced Mr. Young, Thomas Rinner and John McLennan, of Montreal, and John Caruthers, of Kingston. These gentlemen were appropriately welcomed by the President; and Mr. Young returned thanks on behalf of himself and friends for the reception. Having been invited to address the Convention, he then spoke as follows :

#### REMARKS OF HON. JOHN YOUNG.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN: I would have wished to address you at a later period, when I could have heard some arguments adduced in reference to the object of the Convention here assembled.

I have just returned with my fellow delegates from St. Louis, at which place we were invited to attend a convention, by the National Board of Trade, assembled to consider what could be done to extend the relations between Canada and the United States, and what could also be done to the make highways upon the water communications more perfect than they are. I am very happy to say that our visit there was a very delightful one, and a very fine spirit was shown in every respect by the parties there assembled, and a desire to do everything they could to break down the barriers that exist, in order that there might be free commercial intercourse between the two peoples. The question of cheapening transport is one that is now engaging the attention of all governments. It is now engaging, particularly, the attention of this people, and there is no question upon which so much depends as that upon cheapening transport between the vast territories of the West and the ocean.

The canals that were made in the first instance by the State of New York to connect the West with the Atlantic, were scarcely finished when their enlargement became necessary, and all the predictions of De Witt Clinton—notwithstanding the ridicule to which he subjected

himself in the earlier stages of that work—as to the amount of business that would be carried on upon their waters, fell far short of what it actually was.

The Erie Canal has since been enlarged so that boats of 210 tons can now pass from Buffalo to tide-water at Troy. Notwithstanding that enlargement, it has now become absolutely necessary that works of a much larger character should be undertaken to accommodate the vast business of the Northwest. When you think of that vast plateau of country above Lake Superior, 2,000 feet above the sea, and consider that from that vast plateau of which the River Mississippi is the great natural outlet, and that eight States of the Union are embraced in that country, containing nearly 2,000,000 of people—and which, under the ordinary computation, is capable of sustaining a population of 200,000,000—it becomes a question of the greatest possible moment what can be done to cheapen the cost of transportation of the vast amount of cereals of that country; and not only cereals, for it is a country rich in forests and rich in mineral deposit; and I cannot conceive of anything more important than the business men of the great country meeting together to see what can be done to devise means by which this great object can be accomplished.

We in Canada are in exactly the same position that you have been in reference to this question of transportation. In the early days of Canada we commenced canals, and we made them with 19 feet locks. Those locks were afterwards increased, some to 26 feet, and some to 45 feet, and some to 55 feet, but unfortunately the one that controls them all, the Welland Canal, is but 20 feet wide, and through it vessels of but 350 tons can now pass. But for that canal vessels of 850 tons could pass down the St. Lawrence. The question then to be ascertained is, how can this best be accomplished? There is no longer any difficulty with reference to the St. Lawrence. By the Washington treaty you have the same right to the St. Lawrence as we in Canada have, and there is a perfect identity of interests between the two peoples in getting the best route from the West to the ocean. There is no longer any difficulty of that character. You may have, occasionally, in the construction of your railways, to cross over into our territory, as the best means of going East. We, on the other hand, in the construction of our railways coming west, find it necessary to go from the Sault St. Marie up to the head of Lake Superior on the south side of that lake, while on the other hand, you may require by that railway to come down on the north side of the Ottawa. The canals should be constructed according to the same principle, where it can be done for the best interest of all.

Now, this delegation, representing our Dominion Board of Trade in Canada, have no right, nor do we speak at all for our Government. We merely speak as merchants engaged earnestly in devising means whereby the results that you are met here to-day to forward can be attained.

In St. Louis we stated that we believed that if the Government of the United States would offer to exchange the natural products of both

countries upon equal terms and give the registration of ships built in Canada as American, the Canadian Government would enlarge the whole system of canals from the head of the lakes to the ocean, and that means would be adopted by which the canals could be made to go into Lake Champlain, and the best results could be obtained by which transportation could be cheapened.

The first canal that exists from the head of Lake Superior is a Canal constructed by your Government, one and one-tenth miles long, with locks 75 feet wide and 11 feet 6 inches deep. There is no obstruction beyond that, because the St. Clair flats, opposite your city, have been deepened to fully that depth; and the next difficulty is the overcoming of the Falls of Niagara, which have a fall of 350 feet.

As I mentioned before, the Welland Canal has the capacity to take vessels through it of 350 tons burthen. Mr. Stanley, an eminent engineer in Canada, the present contractor of the Hoosac Tunnel, a man of very great ability, has surveyed that whole work, and he has adopted a route for that canal—not the present one, but making its outlet in the Niagara River—and the size of the locks that he suggests would be sufficient to pass vessels of 950 to 1,000 tons burthen. That canal, as you are aware, is only 28 miles long. We have had surveys of the rapids of the St. Lawrence made, but there is no obstacle in the downward trip, excepting these 28 miles of canal, for a thousand-ton vessel coming down from Montreal or Quebec without transshipment, and the result of such a vessel carrying 50,000 bushels of grain, or perhaps 60,000, would be such that it would reduce transportation to the least possible rate. Then it has been suggested in reference to the Eastern trade, that a canal should be constructed from the St. Lawrence into Lake Champlain. Such a canal has also been surveyed by several engineers, some of whom have been American engineers. There has been no difficulty and no difference of opinion amongst any of those engineers. There are only 25 feet of lockage between the St. Lawrence and Lake Champlain, and that canal is  $30\frac{1}{2}$  miles long, so that with 58 miles of canal you could reach Lake Champlain at Burlington or Whitehall, where you can deliver Western produce for the supply of New England and all the country around it. Then again, it ought to be remarked that the export trade of this country is a mere tithe of the trade for home consumption. The trade of the Eastern States far exceeds the export trade, for of the great bulk of property that flows from the West to the East, more than five-eighths is consumed in the East, and only about three-eighths is exported.

Again, should the State of New York choose to enlarge her canal down from Whitehall, it can be easily done. It has also been surveyed by the very best of your engineers—I may mention Mills and McAlpine—and there is no reason why a thousand-ton vessel could not go from the head of Lake Superior, or the head of Lake Michigan, or any other Western port, down to New York, without breaking her bulk, and

deliver her cargo, and come back with a cargo from that place to any port on the vast Western lakes.

I am aware, Mr. President, that considerable jealousy exists with regard to localities, but I think any one who has been so long engaged in business as I have been, must know that there is no occasion for jealousy whatever. The great thing is to construct those works where they can be constructed best, and I have faith that the increase of business will be so great within the next 25 or 30 years, that it will require all the avenues to the East, whether by rail or canal, and that there is no necessity for any kind of jealousy among the people of the two countries.

As I have mentioned, we have had a survey made of the Welland Canal. I understand that the object of this meeting is to ascertain what can be done on American territory to get around Niagara Falls. I have given a great deal of attention to these subjects, and I believe that you will find that no engineer in either country, if he had the power of selection, would select the southern side to make a canal connecting Lake Erie with Lake Ontario. I believe the best side for that canal is in Canadian territory. We have found, as a fact—and I have no doubt that all business men in Detroit and elsewhere well know the fact—that the Welland Canal is open from 10 to 14 days earlier in the spring than the port at Buffalo for shipment. The prevailing north-west winds in that season drive the ice from the north to the south side of the river. We have one canal in Canada, about 45 miles above Montreal, constructed on the south side, and yet that canal is from five to ten days later in opening than any canal we have upon the north side, plainly showing the law which governs in this respect, and showing that the north side of the river is the best side for construction.

Now, as regards the cost of these works, so far as I have the estimates, the cost would be about \$5,200,000 to enlarge the Welland Canal. But supposing it cost \$6,000,000. I have not the estimates of your engineers for the construction of the Niagara Falls Canal, but I am quite sure from my knowledge of the locality that it will probably double the cost of the Welland, and although we shall be happy to see a canal constructed on either side of the river, which will relieve us of a great deal of expense and difficulty in constructing our canals, it is of vast moment that in discussing this matter by business men, the best possible route, irrespective of country, should be chosen for such a great public work, because if it cost double the amount that the canal will upon the Canadian side, it will only add to the cost of transportation.

I have seen it stated in a Lockport paper that it would only be driving business through a foreign territory to make the canal upon the opposite shore, and that there could be no such thing as a ship canal.

I think there is some misconception on this point. I believe that it is for the interest of both countries that inland vessels, which can be navigated for a great deal less than the Atlantic ship, should be made



as large as possible, because it has been found that the larger the vessel the cheaper the transportation. If you could safely navigate a propeller of 1,000 tons burden, built of steel plates, which are now getting so cheap, and by which the floating character of the vessel can be made much less than it has heretofore been—if you can build these ships of 1,000 tons burden, to go to a point where the ocean steamer can be met, whether that point for the Eastern trade is Burlington, Montreal, or Quebec, there to meet the ocean vessel of 3,000 or 4,000 tons burden—a transshipment must be made to enable cheapest freight to be obtained.

I have no idea myself that the Atlantic vessel can ever be profitably employed by going way up into the interior. I think it will depend upon the size of the ship. Steam vessels have already been built to go to New York, of 5,000 tons burden. We have had one vessel come up the St. Lawrence of 3,910 tons burden, and there are vessels built of 3,250 tons burden; so that these inland vessels of 1,000 tons, wherever they meet a larger vessel, there will be the point of transshipment, by which the cost of transportation will be lessened to the greatest possible extent. Nor is it only in the downward freight that this thing will benefit all classes of the community. In the importation of freight, which is becoming of so immense a character, these vessels will come and take the cargo from these ships, and take it to Detroit, or Cleveland, or Toledo, or Chicago, and deliver them in as good order as when received at the port of Liverpool or London, or any other port of the world.

These results, as I said before, are now coming to be realized by both peoples. The Washington treaty, as I said before, has broken down a great many barriers that existed, and, as I stated at St. Louis, the fact is that we are all one people, sprung from the loins of our great old mother, England, and that it is our duty to see how far we can really work together. There will be no longer any necessity for making works for war purposes or anything pertaining thereto, but that spirit of rivalry must exist in which we must work together to see which of us, whether we upon the northern or you upon the southern side of a certain line, can do the most. I think that will be the policy, and that ought to be the rivalry between these two great English-speaking people. (Cheers.)

#### MR. McLENNAN'S REMARKS.

At the conclusion of Mr. Young's remarks, John McLennan, Esq., was introduced to the Convention, and spoke as follows:

MR. PRESIDENT: I return my thanks to you and to the convention for the courtesy which you have shown us by assigning us a place on this floor. I am reminded that we are only here by accident, and that our representative character before you at this moment is of the simplest form.

We are individuals of a nation (if I may venture to call it a nation, and we are beginning to assume that character); we are individual members of that nation, very little more.

When I see around me gentlemen, who are Governors of States, and who control the commerce of States greater than many of the sovereignties of Europe, I feel that we of the Dominion are but little among the nations; and if we appear before you for a few moments more, I should like it to be as representatives of the enlarged commercial views of the nation.

I think the time has come when that great question of commerce—commerce that has been the herald of civilization in all ages, commerce which with the spirit of enterprise has secured to us of the Anglo-Saxon race the supremacy we enjoy, and enabled us to extend so widely the scope of our influence,—should begin to claim the attention of men and of nations, which its importance demands.

I feel, gentlemen, that such meetings as this, such meetings as the one we have attended at St. Louis, such meetings as have within the past few years been inaugurated under the auspices of Boards of Trade, are in the right direction, and that they will have an influence in bringing about better relations between man and man, nation and nation. I feel that in this sense you are doing an important work when you meet together in the manner you have, to discuss the business relations in which you stand one to another and to your neighboring nations.

I have remarked that we are here by accident. A great part of the events of life appears to us all very much in the form of accident. Things occur without our control, but we find upon examining them that they occurred under the direction of law, law that governs all things. Under this great law the St. Lawrence has been made a highway for nations. Well might that people be proud who could say "it is ours" in any exclusive sense. I have heard a great deal in my time of the sentiment, "America for Americans, Canada for Canadians," but I believe the St. Lawrence and all rivers of that kind were made for mankind; and I hope to see the day when that great river will not be *yours*, will not be *ours*, but when it shall be used for the common benefit of the world. [Applause.]

We on the other side have our little crotchets. We have some little vanities about governing ourselves in our own way. Perhaps they are mere conceits, and perhaps there may be some germ of wisdom at the bottom of them. We do not doubt that you are very competent to govern yourselves, and we respect your institutions and your laws. We think we can live side by side and have this highway and many other things in common, and that we can enjoy them thus none the less because, forsooth, we differ in some matters that do not concern our common use of them.

The position which you occupy at this moment is one that is fraught with great interest to "a multitude of men that no man can number."

When we look around us and behold the vast fields that are ready to return blessings to mankind for the labor that may be bestowed upon them, the mind is almost awed in view of the things that may be accomplished—in view of the great progress that mankind may make. We look forward for a development such as the world has never yet seen. For there is room where, with the blessings of freedom and the schoolmaster, man may attain a position of peace and prosperity that the world has never witnessed. Gentlemen, we are at the beginning of this development, and if you or we can do anything to accelerate it, to insure that men shall thus be benefited by our existence, then it is our duty to do it. I find the following language from one of the venerable men of your country in the pamphlet that has been distributed to the members of this convention: “The experience of nearly 81 years has taught me that the greatest and most important question that now demands the consideration of the American people is, whether we, as a nation, are willing to know the truth, and let the truth make and maintain our freedom.”

I maintain that if the American nation is willing to know the truth and let that truth make and maintain their freedom, then that truth is good, not for the American nation alone, but for all mankind.

On the question of canals I have nothing to add to what my friend, Mr. Young, has said. If you can make a canal that will help forward the produce of this teeming country so that every bushel of grain will be worth two, you will have followed in the wake of that benefactor of mankind of whom we have so often heard, who makes two blades of grass grow where formerly one grew. If you can make those two blades of the value of four, it will be something worthy of your highest efforts.

#### HISTORY OF THE NIAGARA SHIP-CANAL PROJECT.

Mr. Scoville, of New York, announced that Rev. Mr. Odell had a communication from Mr. A. S. Tryon, of Lewiston, New York, a man 80 years of age, who had been elected a delegate to the convention, but who was unable to attend. As this letter contained a history of the project of a ship canal around Niagara Falls, he requested that the convention would hear it read. Mr. Odell was then introduced, and read the letter, which is as follows:

LEWISTON, May 16, 1871.

JOHN B. EDWARDS, Esq., Oswego, N. Y.:

MY DEAR SIR—I come to you by the pen of a trembling hand, in this day of my octogenarian life, soliciting the reading of this production, which has grown out of a varied experience and observation of the past

fifty-six years, at my abiding home in the village of Lewiston, Niagara county, N. Y. I desire a comparison of my ideas with yours, and those of your Oswego friends, upon the subject of the Niagara ship canal, a contemplated passage for vessels on the American side around the Falls of Niagara.

The feasibility and importance of this project have long been a topic of thought, conversation and legislative enactment. Nevertheless, the work is not even begun, and, if it is any nearer completion than it was half a century ago, it is in the more matured state of public opinion and desire, and not in fact.

Having felt a deep interest in this matter for many years, I have, from time to time, carefully examined and studied its different phases as they were developed, all the while hoping that some one of the various plans suggested for its accomplishment might succeed. But, until this time, each plan has been doomed to failure, and the friends of the enterprise to disappointment. Yet, after these long years of non-success, I am no less impressed with the demand for the work than at any past time. If any change has occurred in my mind, it has been toward a deeper conviction that the project *must* succeed, and that at no very distant day. As a completed work it may never delight the eyes of one whose steps are drawing so nigh the borders of another land as mine are, yet having a desire to contribute to the well-being of my fellows, I wish to do something that will aid in securing this needed canal, which would for all future time bless the race. The desire to accomplish this has inclined me to make this communication to you in these my last days.

Permit me, therefore, to place before you some of the past history of the project. What I am about to state are facts well known to myself and many others in this community, and are capable of being proved by authorized and well-kept documents, copies of which are in the hands of gentlemen of this place now present.

In the year 1823, while the Erie Canal was being completed, a general desire existed, in this community, to see a ship canal built around the Falls of Niagara. This desire took expression in the form of an organized company, which was chartered by the Legislature of the State of New York, April 11, 1823. It was empowered to hold all necessary property, and "open navigation from the Niagara River above the falls thereof, to the heights near the village of Lewiston." The company was composed of influential persons of this place and vicinity, and it sought to carry out the wishes of the people, with whom its members were daily conversant. Under the auspices of Nathan Roberts, an engineer of the Erie Canal from its beginning, a survey was made for the contemplated ship canal, pursuant to charter. That survey was as follows: Beginning at the mouth of Gill Creek, two miles above the falls, a line was run about due north to the brow of the mountain, just above the village of Lewiston. He made full and careful reports of his surveys, and showed that the canal could be built on that route, with single locks,

for a little less than \$1,000,000. Notwithstanding the favorable report, the project failed for one of the best reasons in the world, the want of funds to carry it out.

In the year 1835, twelve years after this attempt, the project had grown into national proportions, and Andrew Jackson, then President of the United States, sent Capt. W. G. Williams, Topographical Engineer of the United States Army, to make surveys, "preparatory to the construction of a ship canal around the falls of Niagara." Accordingly surveys were made, one of which followed that of Mr. Roberts, on a due north course from Gill Creek to the top of the mountain. His report was carefully prepared and printed. He calculated the cost of construction, including the locks, would be \$3,000,000, with the avowed understanding that both material and labor were more expensive than in 1823. The failure of this project may be attributed, in part at least, to the financial crisis of 1837.

Then, in the year 1851, sixteen years afterwards, the Legislature of our State granted a charter for the construction of the "Lewiston water-works," having reference to a miniature canal, for the purpose of leading water from the Niagara River, above the falls thereof, to a convenient point at the brow of the mountain, near Lewiston, for manufacturing purposes. The size was to have been twelve feet bottom, four feet deep, and six miles long, having a current of five miles an hour, and a fall of 200 feet at Lewiston. Mr. Blackwell, a competent engineer of Buffalo at that time, was employed to make surveys, which having done, he offered to build the works for \$175,000. At that time money was dear and the sum, then large, could not be raised by the citizens of our small village, and the project, like all before it, failed.

From this time onward for more than twenty years, the matter of a ship canal at Niagara Falls lay dormant, but its importance did not admit of its being left to die of neglect. Consequently, in about the year 1863 it came before the President and Congress, and new surveys were ordered and made in 1868. In pursuance of this order, several lines were run, and full (but it is feared, partial) reports were prepared, and the whole matter laid before Congress for its sanction, and in view of aid being granted for its construction. In the winter of '69 (but a few years past), the subject came to a vote, and was lost by a very small majority.

Such is, in brief, the past history of the Niagara ship-canal project, and most of what I have stated is from personal knowledge. And, considering what has been done, and the vast importance and the feasibility of the enterprise, the question will arise:

Why has not this canal been built?

This is a question that might admit of several answers, but a summary one may be given in a very few words. Simply, and truthfully, conflicting State interests, and purely local selfishness, have been, and still are, the mortal enemies of the Niagara ship-canal project. The commercial men along the line of the Erie canal, with the officers of that

work, have not failed to use every effort, apparently important, to defeat every attempt, public and private, that has thus far been made to secure this new and important ship canal. They seem determined to *compel* the vast commerce of the West to pass through their cherished route, although they *know* it is perplexingly small, insufficient and tedious. It would seem, that while some of them occupy a center, and desire to make all things stand still before them, they forget that the world moves. To ride on one of Erie's swiftest packet boats was once a luxury, but what *attache* of that canal would now leave a lightning train to enjoy the blessing? Two miles an hour was fast enough for goods to hurry on, thirty years ago, but express speed is too slow for many kinds now. The spirit of the age is quick passage, quick sales, quick returns. And this is illy met by the line boat that is stuck on the summit level, or is dragging its slow length along sunk a foot in the mud. That canal was a noble work, and every lover of his race cries, all hail! at the name of its originator; but, the trouble now is — and that is not its fault — the world of commerce has outgrown it. This its friends know, and, with a zeal worthy of imitation, they seek among the possibilities its enlargement and greatly increased speed upon its waters. Would it might be so; and we hope the time is not far off when the dwellers along that useful line will have the satisfaction of seeing at least one canal steamer, plowing their mighty deep, passing from Buffalo to New York, *ad lib.*

No individual or corporation is to be blamed for seeking the prosperity of home interests, but the blame comes in when that interest would throw itself athwart the pathway of progress. And we are sorry to be obliged to say that, while the West, and a large proportion of the East, have been seeking to co-operate with our State authorities, or with the General Government, in securing new and greatly enlarged navigation toward the seaboard, the interest of which we have just spoken has unremittingly stood in the way. Lest there might be room for doubt here, I will cite you to a fact that is of sufficient import to silence any misgiving that may arise. When the effort of 1859 was being made in Congress, the officers of the Erie Canal appeared in force, and strenuously opposed aid being granted for the required purpose, offering as their reason, "that if the Niagara Canal should be built, the revenues from the Erie Canal would be lessened." For that reason they further urged that it should not be entered upon, "not even by the General Government, for general and national purposes." It is further known that, in a certain Western New York Congressional District, an indispensable qualification of a candidate for Congressional honors has been, for years, a pledged hostility to any and all Niagara ship-canal efforts, on the part of the State or General Government. The purpose has been to check-mate every effort, by, first, the State Legislature, which, of either parties' choice, utterly refuses to grant a charter worth a straw for the project; second, by influencing national action against it. The power of New York State and city has, for a long time, exerted almost the influence of a despot in the

halls of Congress, for the city is the acknowledged financial center of the Nation, and the State has been known and felt as the Empire one in political influence. The objection and the objectors, then, to the success of the ship-canal enterprise, are mainly found within the radius of our own State. That men should succeed in their opposition to a scheme so vastly important to the well-being of a nation, upon grounds so supremely selfish, is one of the mysteries of special pleading, and a nation's servility. Yet this is done, and that in the face of the fact that the West is surcharged with grain that must be fed to cattle and swine to save it, while hungry men, women and children of our own and other lands are asking for bread that cannot be sent for want of proper means of transportation, the supply of which can be furnished by the vote of a single Congress! How long matters will remain as they are is hard to be seen, but certainly until the East, the North and the West awake right earnestly to the fact that what is sought by them is a God-provided right. The All-wise Father pointed out the natural way from the Great Lakes to the seaboard *via* the Detroit and Niagara Rivers, which are indispensable links in the flow of those vast bodies of water to the ocean. The Detroit was left free and navigable, while the Niagara is obstructed by a slight barrier to navigation. And right here, let me ask one question: If the Niagara was as smooth to-day as when it went gliding into the bosom of Lake Ontario at Lewiston, or as unobstructed as the Detroit, would men have ever thought of making an artificial channel of 350 miles in length? Of course not, will be the answer of all. Then I ask again, if this is the most natural route, why not use it? The answer to this is, there is a barrier in the way. That is true, but how unimportant; only six miles in a stretch of unimpeded navigation, save this, of 3,000 miles! From the head of Lake Superior to the mouth of the St. Lawrence is 3,229 miles; Lake Michigan, 3,112.

The barrier is indeed here, but the Creator left it just as unimportant as possible, and yet gave, for the admiring gaze of the world, Niagara's cataract. And may we say that, seemingly, even care was taken to send the waters around twelve miles in a half-moonish curve of rapids, fall and gorge, while the diameter is but six miles from navigable to navigable water, above and below, on the American side. With these facts before them, it is passing strange that persons will oppose so natural a work, especially for reasons so supremely selfish. But there is made at least a show of objection to the project by what is assumed to be the cost.

By this showing some may have been hoodwinked into the opposition ranks, who otherwise would be the friends of the enterprise, and we propose to show, by valid and sufficient facts, that the assumption is false and unfounded.

We will do this by recalling to your attention some of the history of the past surveys. Before doing this, however, let me lay before you what I believe to have been the origin of the enormous-cost idea that

opposers use against this route. One General Stewart, and a man by the name of Sorrell, an engineer, made a superficial calculation, based upon Capt. Williams' report, and with a seeming direct intention to defeat the project, stated that the cost would be \$12,000,000. Thus, I believe, the \$12,000,000 idea came to attach itself to this route. Now, in answer to this, let me cite you to former history. When Mr. Roberts surveyed the route, on coming to the crest of the mountain he ran his line eastward and diagonally along the side of the mountain to its base, which rests on a level of 100 feet above the level of the river, thence on an angle westward to the river bank. Thus he increased his line to eight miles in length, and it is not certain that his estimate was not for a route ten instead of six miles in length, as we propose. His plan was to descend the mountain by thirty-two single locks of ten feet lift each, sufficiently large to accommodate any vessel then on the lakes and in the carrying trade. He estimated that the cost would be, for the whole work, \$930,-825.63, or less than \$1,000,000.

Capt. Williams calculated the increased value of labor and material in 1835 over that of 1823, with the additional cost of double locks, and gave us the whole amount of expense that would be incurred in the construction at \$3,000,000. This is less than \$12,000,000.

Mr. Blackwell offered to build the "Lewiston water-works" for \$175,000. Subsequently this company had in view a great enlargement of their canal, and applied to the Legislature for the privilege to increase the amount of capital, which was granted once and again. The first time to \$1,500,000, then to \$2,000,000, which was thought to be ample at that time to construct a ship canal. I have one more point to make. When the subject came before Congress in 1868, a late member from this district stood an advocate for it, and in a speech he said: "It is proposed that \$12,010,000 shall be appropriated, or so much thereof as shall be necessary, but it is confidently believed that the amount asked will not be needed." It is well known that he advocated the Lockport route, which is thirty-two miles long. He "confidently believed" that that number of miles of canal would not cost \$12,000,000. Now, basing our calculations upon his statement, which was founded upon actual survey, and we reach the following conclusion: A thirty-two mile canal would cost less than \$12,000,000, what then would a six-mile canal cost? Not \$2,225,000! We will not hold figures (which are said not to lie) too strenuously to the point here, for fear that they tell us in this matter that which is "too good to be true." But, sir, by a careful consideration of the above facts, and the other well-known facts, the shortness and feasibility of the route, may we not truthfully conclude, along with many others, that the route now proposed (the short one) would not involve a cost of more than half of the amount stated in print by its opponents? Looking at all the facts, we feel, beneath our calculations, the solid rock of the most careful and reliable estimates, which with any mind should be sufficient to explode every hypothetical statement.



Enough has been presented to obtain a just cause, if that cause was justly dealt with; but as it is not, I will place before your mind a connected view of this route, so that you may see at once its beauty, practicability and comparative inexpensiveness. I said above, that the water of the river, just above and below the falls, and including the falls themselves, has a circular form, but in truth the shape is nearer an obtuse angle, having its vortex on the Canadian side, by which is plainly seen that it is much nearer Lewiston by a straight line due north from Cayuga Creek, than *via* the river's course; the straight line from point to point would be six miles long, while the length of the river within the same points is from twelve to thirteen miles.

The profile shows you very nearly the proposed route from Cayuga Creek to the crest of the mountain just above Lewiston, from which point to navigable water, at the base of the mountain, would be about half a mile further. From Cayuga Creek to the mountain the substratum is rock, near enough to the surface, a large part of the way, to enter into the excavation, thus affording, in a natural way, rocky sides to the canal, and of course rock bottom. The rock removed by the work of excavation would be used in the construction of locks at the mountain, dams, etc. A distance of five and three-fourth miles from Cayuga Creek, and one-fourth of a mile from the mountain, there exists an almost natural basin, through which runs what is called Hewitt's Creek, a small stream that empties into the river's gorge just west of the line proposed. The sides of this basin rise to the height of about twenty feet, while at their most elevated level they are separated about one-fourth of a mile. By throwing a dam across this creek there would be formed a dock which would answer several useful ends, such as slack water in the canal above, a fine moorage harbor of one mile in length and one-fourth of a mile wide (if this size should be desired), an unfailing lock-feeder, and a vast and inexhaustible water-power, having the Niagara River for a race, and the inland seas of America for a mill-pond. At this point it is proposed to sink a perpendicular shaft to the depth of ten feet below the surface of the river, of sufficient size in length and breadth to admit of four or six vessels at once, and which would be admitted to the river through a drift, connecting the shaft and the river. Thus by a single lock the waters of the river above the falls can be made to carry vessels to the smooth waters at Lewiston. Should this be deemed impracticable, it is but necessary to extend the locks over the sides of the mountain, where the formation is such that one looking at it carefully, is led to say, surely this was made to accommodate the lockage of the Niagara ship canal.

Here is ample room for any desired number of locks. The whole distance from the crest of the mountain to the water's surface is 320 feet, but the descent of the mountain is broken, or divided into three different and separate stages, at nearly equal distances. The first 100 feet terminates in a lateral basin, quite deeply indented and gradually descending into what is known as Capt. Williams' basin, at the foot of the moun-

tain, which is about 100 feet above the river. An area of 120 acres was surveyed with reference to the construction of such basin at this point, for a moorage harbor, where vessels could lie safely at all times. From this level the descent to the river is on a natural inclination. Looking at the above facts one cannot refrain from thinking how perfectly designed was all this to accommodate a work such as is proposed, and cannot be other than the very cheapest route within the possibilities.

But, sir, let us contemplate the work completed, as proposed, and what do we behold? A ship canal of only six miles in length, with stone sides, in fact, and rock bottom, and smooth water from the river to the mountain, through which steamers are passing at their usual lake speed, to reach the locks on the mountain's crest. There is no towpath, nor any poor, mutilated horses, or other beasts, for all motive power is that of steam; and as on other ship canals, loaded propellers, having in tow loaded sailing vessels, and the fleet little tug doing the work of many beasts. Thus would be this completed link of the great water highway between the vast West of America and the grain-consuming East of our own and European countries. And could it do less than foster the general enhancement of property, greatly facilitate communication between the over-populated countries of the far East and the inviting lands of our West, and thereby largely aid emigration to them? Little benefit can be expected from Asiatic sources. Our eyes look beyond the Atlantic for aid to people our vast and fertile, yet unoccupied, lands. These emigrants would be greatly benefited by the completion of this needed link in the water communication of the world. Our government would be benefited by largely increasing sales of public lands; and the trade of the West would be freed from burdens that it purposes to bear no longer. Shall not then the East, the North and the whole West, doff the selfish purposes of the Erie Canal interest, and begin to work in earnest to secure this much needed passage? A few may suffer, but in a great matter like this, individual interests submit to the public good. Such is the only sound National policy and basis of National greatness.

But, suppose the cost would be \$6,000,000, would not the sum be well-expended if done upon a work so important?

This feature of the project appears from many stand-points, but time and space admit of the notice of but two or three. And first, it is important as a needed link to complete a vast chain of inland navigation. From the land of the great upper lakes to the mouth of the St. Lawrence, there are 3,000 miles of free navigation, save the six-mile obstacle at the Falls of Niagara. This stands in the way between Lakes Erie and Ontario, as did once the Sault St. Marie Rapids between Superior and Lakes Huron and Erie. What shall be done with the rapids? was in past times so important that a canal, one of the finest in the world, was built, large enough to float the largest ships with ease. The question now is, What shall be done with the obstacle at Niagara? There is no other way but to overcome it by a useful and indispensable ship canal,

just as was done in the former case. An English authority says of the Ste. Marie: "Trade is increasing so rapidly that a canal on the British side will be required at no distant day." If, then, need is already felt at that point for enlarged communication to meet the demands of the trade of *one* lake, can we be surprised that a great pressure is now felt for a single canal at Niagara to meet the demands of trade on *five* great lakes? Secondly, the vast trade of the St. Lawrence basin demands enlarged accommodation. This basin lies on and along the 43d parallel of latitude, a portion of the zone that is not surpassed in fertility. Wheat and corn, its staple crops, grow so abundantly that millions of bushels are sent to Europe every year, and the States lying along and at the heads of the great lakes can spare to supply the lack in Europe from 50,000,000 to 150,000,000 bushels annually; perhaps twice that amount, if there existed facilities to transport it. But there is now too much delay—too much transshipment—consequently too much cost, in passing it from the producer to the consumer. The business of the Erie Canal alone at Buffalo, in 1869, amounted to \$81,000,000, \$50,000,000 of which was for exports. The trade by rail at that point is also great, but cannot be ascertained; yet we are safe in saying that it is beyond the above amount. Estimating it equal to the canal trade, we have a sum of over \$100,000,000 for exports alone. This item reveals something of the vast trade of this great valley, and in its magnitude is embodied Buffalo's most forcible argument against a Niagara ship canal. But let me ask a simple question: Should that city desire to stand as a great gate to toll all the commerce of the great Western world because it pays her? The effort of the West to obtain other channels of communication, gives this answer. They have resorted to the Welland, of Canada, but only to find that an imperfect relief, and the feeling is, better and more speedy routes must be had. Hence, thirdly, the new and short route is important because of the present demand of Western commerce.

If this Niagara Ship Canal is not made, Canada will have an opportunity, because of our indifference, to enlarge her old or make new canals to accommodate our trade, which has thus far built and maintained the one she has. Abraham Lincoln said in his message of 1863, upon the subject of enlarged navigation from the Mississippi to the Atlantic: "That this interest is one that ere long will *force its own way* I cannot doubt." One of the links of that enlarged navigation was understood to be a Niagara Ship Canal; and that his prophecy must come true at no greatly distant day, appears in the very atmosphere of the commercial world. It is said the project is merely a local one. How? In the West? the East? the northern part of New York? Where local? It is a world-wide necessity. All the United States need it; Europe needs it; and, as a nation, our prosperity depends, in a large degree, upon the manner in which the matter is decided.

Let this canal be but a connecting link, joining the great upper lakes with Ontario, into which the largest craft can go without unloading;

and from thence to New York, *via* the Mohawk and Hudson, or Lake Champlain, as is thought best, and through the St. Lawrence into the Atlantic, destined for any desired European port. But its foes say, "It is a mere local matter." Fudge! But we will admit this fact of their own hatching, and send the whole brood to feed and roost in their grain elevators. "But the South and the Pacific slope cannot favor such a local project." The South needs aid on her ports and levees; besides, the South never was so selfish as to let jealousy ride over her love of public improvements, be they North or South; and as for the Pacific slope, why, her three great railroads will all discharge their lading at the heads of our great lakes. And how will her traffic be accommodated by the present lines of transit, which are now all over-burdened? The Pacific slope cannot afford to crush a matter so important to her trans-continental business as is that of the Niagara Ship Canal. When San Francisco and Puget Sound have fully established trade with China and the Indies, so that such trade passes their ports and cities *en route* to New York, Liverpool and London, this canal must be an indispensable link of communication.

I stop to present but one more reason for its importance, and that is, our National *honor* demands it. It is the province of national paternity to provide bread, cheap and plenty, to all the household. To do this, everything that bears the semblance of monopoly should be broken up and defeated, especially if it is detrimental to the general dissemination of food. And, for national legislators to sit coolly by and see self-interest put shackles on the commerce of the land, causes philanthropists to doubt the complete development of the principle, that the purpose for which national governments ought to exist is to benefit all their subjects.

That the Niagara Ship Canal is a felt want is too clear to be doubted, and every American citizen who desires to see his nation prosper, and all its subjects benefited, should awake to the subject and join with those who wish well to all, in an unceasing effort to procure its construction without further delay.

Respectfully yours,

AMOS J. TRYON.

The communication was accepted, and ordered published with the proceedings of the Convention.

#### REPORT OF THE BUFFALO BOARD OF TRADE.

Mr. S. S. Pomeroy, of New York, sent to the Secretary's desk the following report, adopted by the Buffalo Board of Trade on December 5, relative to the construction of the Niagara Falls Ship Canal, and their refusal to appoint delegates to this Convention :

BOARD OF TRADE ROOMS, }  
 BUFFALO, N. Y., December 9th, 1871. }

TO COLONEL LEWIS A. THOMAS,

*Secretary Commercial Convention at Detroit :*

DEAR SIR—Herewith you will find a report of the Buffalo Board of Trade, which may be considered an answer to your letter of November 8th, 1871, addressed to the President of this Board, desiring the appointment of Delegates to a Commercial Convention, to be held at Detroit, for the purpose of considering the project, and asking for an appropriation from Government in constructing a Niagara Ship Canal, or an expression of the views of this Board of Trade in regard to its importance, necessity, etc., to be presented to the Convention and published with its proceedings. You will observe that this Board declines appointing delegates for the reasons set forth in the report. This Board, therefore, requests that you will have this report read to the Convention and published with its proceedings, as you propose.

Yours respectfully,

WILLIAM THURSTONE,

*Secretary.*

**BUFFALO BOARD OF TRADE—REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO BE PRESENTED TO THE COMMERCIAL CONVENTION AT DETROIT, TO BE HELD DECEMBER 13TH, 1871—RELATIVE TO THE NIAGARA SHIP CANAL PROJECT.**

A meeting of the members of the Buffalo Board of Trade was held on the 5th day of December, 1871, pursuant to notice. The President, James D. Sawyer, Esq., in the Chair. There was a full attendance of members. The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, and the following communication was read by the secretary, Mr. William Thurstone :

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PROPOSED COMMERCIAL CONVENTION AT DETROIT.**

The Committee appointed at a meeting of the members of the Board of Trade on the 1st day of December last, consisting of Messrs. George S. Hazard, Israel T. Hatch and Alfred P. Wright, to whom was referred the subject of the proposed Commercial Convention at Detroit, report as follows :

WHEREAS, This Board of Trade has been notified of the holding of a Commercial Convention at Detroit, through its Corresponding Secretary, Col. Lewis A. Thomas, and received an invitation to attend the same ; also the following letter :

"DUBUQUE, Iowa, Nov. 8th, 1871.

*"To the President of the Buffalo Board of Trade :*

"DEAR SIR :—I am directed by the Executive Committee to request that, if possible, you would comply with the within invitation to attend the Commercial Convention at Detroit on the 29th inst.,\* also to appoint other delegates from your Board. If you cannot be present, will you please give your views on the enterprise contemplated in the assembling of the same, its importance, necessity, &c., to be presented to the Convention and published with its proceedings. \* \* \* \* Please reply at your earliest convenience, and oblige,

"Yours truly,

"LEWIS A. THOMAS,

*Cor. Secretary."*

As this Committee cannot recommend the appointment of delegates, they submit the following explanations and resolutions:

*Resolved*, That as a fuller expression of our views we append the following explanations:

*To the National Commercial Convention at Detroit :*

In view of your invitation for Representatives from this Board to attend the Commercial Convention at Detroit, and in their absence, "to give our views on the enterprise contemplated in the assembling of the same, its importance, necessity, &c.," which was accompanied by the following statement:

"If Buffalo and the State of New York are still determined to fight this work (Niagara Ship Canal) and thereby secure its defeat, we will turn to the Canadas. We *can* reach the Atlantic seaboard not only *without* the consent of the people of New York, but in *defiance* of all their hostility; and we are going to do it."

We consider the occasion a proper one in complying with your request, which menaces the trade of our City and State, to briefly refer to the past history of our State in relation to the inland commerce of this country; and the present and prospective ability of our canals to furnish the cheapest means of transportation for the products of the West to the Atlantic.

We consider ourselves fortunate, as members of this Board and as citizens of Buffalo and the State of New York, that we have no local interests to advocate. Our interests are best, and can only be, promoted by urging such governmental measures as will best promote the interests of our State, the Northwest and the nation. We stand between the producer and consumer—the gateway for the inland commerce of this country. Freedom of transit, without monopoly or taxation, has always been

\* Adjourned until Wednesday, December 13, 1871.

recognized as a cardinal principle in our State policy, and as the strongest material bond of peaceful union, and a portion of the free trade between the States guaranteed by our Constitution.

When the State of New York entered into the Union, she relinquished that part of her revenue which was derived from the duties or taxes on foreign commerce. In the same spirit of true union the national character of the canal was fully recognized from the beginning. The act inaugurating the construction of navigable communications between the great Western and Northern lakes and the Atlantic Ocean stated as its object: "To promote agriculture and manufactures, mitigate the calamities of war and enhance the blessings of peace; consolidate the Union, and advance the prosperity and elevate the character of the United States." The State of New York has always declined to tax inland commerce, and never used the tolls levied upon transit, except to repay the cost of making the canals and of maintaining them; thus granting facilities to the transit of Western productions at a time when she possessed a monopoly of the inland trade, and practically recognizing the right of free commerce through her territory as a right guaranteed by the Constitution and by nature, which could not justly be withheld from the States of the interior.

After Congress had refused any National aid, and all the Western States had declined, this State, with the comparatively slender resources of that day, undertook that system of internal improvements which created emporiums of trade in the West, and changed the almost unbroken wilderness into the abodes of the civilization of our race.

After these refusals, which were galling to her pride, her Commissioners said:

"These men console themselves with a hope that the envied State of New York will continue a suppliant for favor and a dependant upon the generosity of the Union, instead of making a manly and dignified appeal to her own power. It remains to be proved whether they judge justly who judge so meanly of our counsels."

Even then she persevered in rejecting considerations merely selfish. Her Commissioners repudiated the idea of a "transit duty" on Western commerce, to be levied for the advantage of the State, and said;

"This would be the better course if the State stood alone, but fortunately for the peace of the Union this is not the case. We are connected by a bond which, if the prayers of good men are favorably heard, will be indissoluble."

From time to time she has adapted her facilities for internal commerce to the growing wants and to the demands of the States—new empires which were called into prosperous existence by the noble enterprise and far-seeing wisdom of the early statesmen of this Commonwealth.

Under the liberal system hitherto adopted by the State of New York, a reduction in the cost of freight has inured to the benefit of the

farmer by practically diminishing distance between him and the consumer in the cities and manufacturing districts of the East, and our customers throughout the world. This State, after all her expenditures, is yet the only friendly and cheap channel or medium between the producer and the consumer, and is interested for her own citizens only so far as they constitute a part of the whole people of the Union, and is to-day the only check or regulator of freight tariffs upon all other methods of transportation in the North during seven months of the year, when the large cereal movement takes place in which the poor laboring millions are so much interested.

Appreciating the value and importance of preserving the channels of transportation *in our own country* for our own inland trade, our own people and our own canals and railways, the material benefits the nation receives in all its parts from uninterrupted freedom of exchange and transit through every State, and guided by the dictates of our traditional policy, our public men, like Seymour, Ruggles, Brooks, Evarts and others, four years ago, saw the necessity of removing, as soon as possible, all restrictions or tolls upon the Western merchandise passing over our canals. This could only be done by an amendment of the antiquated financial article of our Constitution of 1846—made a quarter of a century ago to one-third our present commerce and population—which pledged unchangeably the revenues of the canals to pay off the remaining canal debt, now only about twelve million of dollars, in about three years. Thus making high tolls a constitutional necessity. The struggle commenced about four years ago with the non-progressive portion of each of the political parties of this State, aided by the railways—the latter have withdrawn their opposition, finding that their interests are best promoted in enabling the Erie canal to maintain the commercial supremacy of this State as in the past, for six or seven months, when they would have a monopoly for the remainder of the year.

After many legislative vicissitudes, two years ago the Legislature of this State passed unanimously an act to submit to the people an amendment to the Constitution, which directed the proper authorities to fund the canal debt and reduce the tolls to the minimum point of maintenance of the canals and a small sinking fund to pay the extended canal debt. Practically this would have given to the country a free canal to-day! Insidious and malign influences prevented the printing and circulation of the free canal ballots in the interior of the State, and 180,000 voters were thus debarred from voting for this measure, and a minority vote secured its defeat. The popular expression, as fairly interpreted as the result of this election, of the City of New York and river counties, of 100,000 majority in favor of it, and the almost unanimous votes of all the commercial counties, accompanied by the fact that both the political parties in their recent State Conventions placed the free canal policy in their platforms, leaves no room for a doubt that as soon as the conditions of the Constitution can be complied with, another amendment to



the Constitution will be submitted and adopted unanimously. The unanimous passage of the Free Canal Funding Bill by the Legislature was accepted by the Canal Board as a mandate to reduce the tolls, and they were reduced fifty per cent. Thus the policy of low tolls and a free canal has been inaugurated, and this coming year they will be reduced twenty-five per cent. more. With a free canal, its channel being improved and strengthened, and steam used as a motive power, as it has been for the last four years upon all important canals in Europe, one hundred and fifty million bushels of grain can be passed over our canal, furnishing the cheapest transportation that can be found in this or any other country. This crowning act in our State policy would be dedicating to the use of the people of these United States public works which have cost over one hundred million dollars, and part of it paid from taxation of our people.

The "Continental Enterprise" (so called by you) presented to us embraces a Niagara Ship Canal around the Falls on the American side, thence through Lake Ontario and through the Canadian canals made to pass the Rapids of the St. Lawrence, thence to Montreal, thence through another Canadian ship canal, commencing at the mouth of the Sorel, fifty miles below Montreal, to Lake Champlain, and from thence by another ship canal to the deep waters of the Hudson, below Albany. This scheme may be described as follows :

The distance from Montreal to New York, *via* the St. Lawrence and Sorel rivers, Lake Champlain, the Champlain Canal and the Hudson River, is over 500 miles.

From Buffalo to New York, *via* the Canal and the Hudson, the distance is 500 miles.

The lockage is less by the Erie Canal route, for the *up* lockage in the Sorel is avoided, and the *down* lockage to the Hudson, etc. The distance lost in shipping property to Liverpool *via* Montreal and New York is the distance from Lake Erie to Montreal — over 600 miles. So, of course, Liverpool and European-bound property, once at Montreal, would go down the St. Lawrence and over the sea, thus effecting a saving of 700 miles.

Grain can be transferred here into canal-boats for one-half cent per bushel. Can a vessel carry grain from Lake Erie to Montreal for that sum, even admitting that a transfer would not be necessary at Kingston, which would be necessary until the St. Lawrence Canals are enlarged and deepened, as three-fourths of the grain is now transferred into barges ?

Our lateral canals, by increasing the business of the Erie canal, have always paid ; our Southern Canals, when completed to the coal beds of Pennsylvania, will be among our most useful canals in cheapening the transit of its coal, in which our Lake States are so deeply interested. Although all the coal may not pass over them, they will fix the freight tariff for coal over railroads, the same as the Erie Canal regulates the freight tariff on the transit of breadstuffs, and even save, to some extent,

the people of Pennsylvania from the consequences of their folly in selling their canals to the railways.

If desirable, the State or National Government can make the Erie Canal as capacious as the proposed canals in this "continental enterprise" leading from Montreal to New York, and with less money, and this would be no experiment.

The cost of these public works would not be estimated less than twenty-five million dollars (\$25,000,000), provided Canada would do her share of the enterprise, which probably she would do if we would restore to her her lost trade with us, out of which British capitalists could make the millions they have been squandering in vain struggles during the last quarter of a century to divert our Western commerce to Montreal and Liverpool. It may as well be added here that when Western merchandise, on its way to European markets, reaches Montreal, it is nearer the Liverpool market than when it reaches the city of New York after adding to its length the 500 miles of inland transportation, via New York, as proposed in your "Continental Enterprise."

The attitude and objects of Canada in all her past gigantic rivalries, which have been sustained entirely by British capital and "Imperial credit," are best understood by recalling the language of congratulation which the Managers of the Grand Trunk Railway, after its completion, expressed at a meeting of British capitalists in London. They said, "The battle ground will not be in Canada, or upon British soil, but upon American soil, and against their American rivals." Their object and commercial condition were plainly expressed by their leading Minister in Canada, Hon. Mr. Galt, who said in a speech: "We have no trade ourselves which would require the enlargement of our canals, no trade that should justify us in enlarging them; we could only be repaid for such improvements by obtaining the American States trade, and *making it pay tolls* or otherwise contribute to our revenues."

We are not disposed to look upon either the trade or public works of any other State or nation with an unfriendly spirit. This State has sought no pre-eminence over its rivals, except in developing its geographical and national advantages, which, whilst they promoted her prosperity, benefited equally all her sister States.

We fully agree in the object of your Convention to secure cheap transit, which is the imperative demand of the hour; without it we cannot compete in the markets of the world with our royal competitors. How can we compete with Russia, who does not levy toll upon her vast inland navigation sufficient to maintain it, according to a recent letter from Minister Curtin at St. Petersburg?

We often hear of direct foreign commerce between ports on the lakes and ports across the seas; such navigation never will be practicable. An ocean vessel ought to have a draft of not less than twenty feet to make her seaworthy. Few ports on the lakes admit a vessel drawing over twelve feet. The flats of St. Clair, and the St. Mary's River, which

lead to the great upper lakes, rarely have more than twelve feet of water in their channels, and it is not possible to increase the depth of water in these avenues, through which all vessels going west must pass, even if it were desirable; so these visions of foreign trade to transoceanic ports fade away in the face of inexorable facts.

The interests of men of every pursuit and the growth of our national revenue will be promoted by such means of intercourse as cheapen the necessities of life to the consumer, while they increase the price paid to the producer. The policy which we have always urged we believe to be in the interest of the Northwest and our State. "The great States of the imperial West reflect the civilization, the laws, the prosperity of the State of New York. They are her children, and may it be ours to see that she never acts the part of a hard step mother, and treats them with neglect or even with coldness. Rather may we feel that their growth is but the measure of our development, and that not a blade of grass or spear of wheat can grow in a Western prairie that does not have its effect in contributing to the wealth of our own State and metropolis."\*

Entertaining these views, which we have expressed as concisely as possible, and at the same time explained our position as citizens of the State, we must protest against the right of the general government to construct any public works upon our soil without the consent of the people of the State; and above all to construct a British ship canal upon our territory—a monument of our State imbecility and national folly.

*Resolved*, That this Board of Trade views with deep interest all projects of internal improvement for developing the resources of the country, and for cheapening and facilitating the transportation of its agricultural, mining and manufacturing products to remunerative markets.

*Resolved*, That while the proposed Niagara Ship Canal may become a possible necessity in the future, observation and experience have demonstrated that the commerce of the country does not require a work of this character; and, if already completed, would not tend to lessen the cost of transportation or cheapen the price of Western products to the consumers of our Eastern States.

*Resolved*, That, in the opinion of this Board, it is inexpedient at this juncture of the nation's financial condition to appeal to its already exhausted treasury for aid in constructing a work which evidently would be greatly to the commercial interest of a foreign nation, and result in diverting traffic from American channels and home markets.

*Resolved*, That the system of cheap transportation inaugurated by the State of New York in constructing the Erie Canal in 1825, at great cost, and the enlargement in 1852 at still greater cost, and the late policy adopted in 1870, of low tolls, together with liberal rewards for the best modes of steam propulsion for canal boats, is good evidence that the people of this State, appreciating the commercial necessities of the country, are determined by wise legislation, to foster and encourage the commerce of the Erie Canal; and to establish cheap, reliable and speedy transportation, and, by still fur-

\*From Mr. Hatch's speech before the Chamber of Commerce, New York, last winter.

ther reduction of tolls, to make as near a free channel as the cost of superintendence and repairs will permit.

*Resolved*, That the Erie Canal, since its construction, has been the cheapest medium of transportation and the only direct water highway for a national commerce between the Western and Eastern States, encouraging thereby the settlement of vast uncultivated territories, which have become prosperous producing States ; and as this canal has now become like a powerful balance-wheel in checking and regulating the prices of transportation between the producing and consuming States, it is for the interest of the great producing States at the West, which have reaped such inestimable benefits from the Erie Canal, and also of the consuming States at the East, to whom cheap food is desirable, to encourage the improvement and enlargement of the Erie Canal to its utmost capacity, so that it may be made what its originators intended, a free national highway.

*Resolved*, That, in view of previous Niagara Ship Canal Conventions, where this policy has been thoroughly and ably discussed, and in view of the disfavor with which it has been repeatedly received by the Congress of the United States, this Board cannot but look upon the agitation of this subject not only as premature and ill-timed, but as savoring strongly of local and foreign interests, and therefore must respectfully decline appointing delegates to the Detroit Convention.

On motion of N. C. Simmons, Esq., the report was received and adopted unanimously.

On motion of Alonzo Richmond, Esq., the report was ordered to be printed and circulated.

The meeting then adjourned.

JAMES D. SAWYER,

*President.*

WILLIAM THURSTONE,

*Secretary.*

BUFFALO, N. Y., Dec. 5th, 1871.

#### MEMORIAL TO CONGRESS.

Gen. Sibley, from the Committee on Memorial to Congress, and Resolutions, submitted their report, and, prefacing it, spoke as follows :

In making this report of the Committee on Memorial, and Resolutions, it may be proper for me to state that that committee was composed of individuals entertaining widely divergent views in matters pertaining to the great interests of the West. Some of us who come from the more remote States of the West have deemed it proper and right that this convention should exercise or use its influence, so far as it could exercise it upon Congress, in aiding certain enterprises which they deem not to be

local in their character, but strictly National ; but some gentlemen from the more eastern States have overruled us in this matter. They have taken the ground that this convention could not properly, with safety, spread its protecting *ægis* over any large extent of country or any number of projects, other than the particular project for which such Eastern gentlemen seem to have assumed that this convention was called.

Those of us from the West who have come here and supposed that our interests would be somewhat protected, supposing that the gentlemen composing this convention would give us some aid at least in the projects which we consider vital to our prosperity, I need not say, have been disappointed ; but I will go further and state that while we are so disappointed, a large majority of the committee have yielded their individual opinions, in order if possible to arrive at some conclusion with reference to the great object of this canal around Niagara Falls, that we may concentrate all the influence of this convention in aid of one project. So far as that is concerned, I believe the committee was unanimous. On no other point was there any unanimity, and therefore I have been instructed by the committee to make the following report :

#### THE REPORT.

WHEREAS, This Convention is deeply impressed with this central thought, to wit : That the true prosperity of any nation can only be found in the greatest prosperity of its individual members and the various commercial and internal relations between the different States ; therefore,

*Resolved*, In the opinion of this Convention, the General Government at Washington should at once adopt a liberal policy as to inter-communication between the West and tide-water, by the great lakes and the rivers leading to and from the centers of the States lying adjacent thereto.

*Resolved*, That in the opinion of this Convention, the construction of the Niagara Ship Canal is of great National importance, and Representatives in Congress are requested to do all in their power to procure an appropriation for that purpose.

*Resolved*, That the Legislature of the State of New York be requested to grant permission to the General Government to enter upon its territory for the purpose of surveying and constructing the Niagara Ship Canal.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions, duly authenticated, be forwarded to the President of the United States and to each member of Congress.

The report was accepted, and the Convention then took a recess until 7:30 P. M.

EVENING SESSION.

---

The Convention reassembled in the evening.

The question being upon the adoption of the report of the Committee on Resolutions, and Memorial, Mr. King, of Toledo, offered the following as an amendment to the report :

*Resolved*, That the necessity of an increased method of transportation is so imperative, that in the event the American Government or the State of New York shall interpose obstacles to a ship canal on the American side, we appeal to the Canadian Government for an enlargement of the Welland and St. Lawrence canals commensurate to the present and growing commerce of the lakes.

Upon this amendment Mr. L. A. Thomas, of Iowa, said :

MR. PRESIDENT—I did not intend to enter particularly upon the discussion of this resolution. I wish, however, to place myself right before this Convention and before the American people upon this question. I am constrained to do that from the position in which the Buffalo Board of Trade have placed me. They have quoted from a private letter to a gentlemen in Buffalo, in which they put into my mouth an expression to the effect that “we are determined to force our way in spite of citizens and the opposition of the State of New York.” Now, that assumes that I am attempting to speak for the people of this American Nation. I disclaim most earnestly and sincerely any such attempt, and if those gentlemen had quoted just one sentence before that, they would not have done me the injustice they have—I presume unintentionally—in the matter. I said in this private letter to a private citizen of Buffalo, Mr. Sizer, “that from extensive observation east and west, on this subject, I became satisfied that this was the sentiment of the people, to-wit :” the language they have quoted. That I stand by. I say it is the sentiment of the American people—I say it is the sentiment of 15,000,000 of the people west of Lake Michigan—I say it is the sentiment of the people of New England—that we must break down the rocky barrier at Niagara Falls in spite of the people of New York or any other people. [Applause.] I say it is the sentiment of the people, and I know it to be the sentiment of the people.

Now, if they had given what I actually said, I would not have said one word in relation to that subject. I am sorry they have placed me in

that situation. There was no necessity for it, and I feel grieved by their action.

But I have one word more to say upon this subject, and I shall be very brief. I, with my friends in the West, feel disappointed in this matter. I, with my friend Gilchrist, from Iowa, have labored hard and long for that Wisconsin Fox River measure. I came here hoping that we might add that to this measure, but I feared all the time. I anticipated trouble on that subject. I met that trouble at other points on this measure. My idea was to break down that barrier between the Lakes and the Atlantic. That was the idea for which I have labored in connection with this measure.

Now, sir, why do I wish to break down that barrier? It is because in the grain and agricultural fields of the West there are productions which are a drug upon the farmers and producers of the West; and why? Because they have no market for that produce. Sir, the pork crop of Iowa and the Mississippi valley this year will not pay the farmer two cents profit. The farmers of Iowa and the Mississippi valley are this year laboring for a bare subsistence, just as a man would do who labors for his daily bread and nothing more. That is the condition of the farming interest of the West.

Now, sir, we are desirous of opening up new channels, new means and new facilities for transportation between the East and the West. If you cheapen transportation in any portion of the route from the grain-fields of the West to the Atlantic, you cheapen it on the eastern end, and you thereby cheapen it on the entire route. Now, that is our idea, and I believe that to be the idea of the whole people west of the lakes. Let us look at that for a single moment. Where are those markets? Baring Bros., in their circular for 1868—and they are well known as the great agricultural brokers of Europe—use language to this effect, that there is now, in 1868, a market in Europe for 500,000,000 bushels of cereals, and for other produce of like character, and they go on still further to say, if the American people will open up this route, and cheapen transportation from the Atlantic up to the Great Lakes, whereby the producers, the agriculturists of the Mississippi Valley and the lake country, can transport their flour and their meats, and their coarse grains, to Europe at a rate of about thirty cents a bushel, they can command that market; and why? Because they can transport cheaper than the same material can be brought down from the Baltic and the Black seas.

They say, if you can transport for thirty cents a bushel to Liverpool, you can command that market. Now, sir, that is the idea that we are laboring for. Where is the difficulty? It is from the foot of Lake Erie. There is the trouble. There is the additional expense. So that instead of being able to carry our produce to Europe for thirty cents a bushel, we are obliged to pay from fifty to seventy-five cents. I think that is about the rate. Now they can bring down that produce from the Baltic and the Black Sea, for from thirty-five to forty-five cents a bushel. Cheaper

transportation from the foot of the lakes to the Atlantic, and we command the whole of that market.

Now, sir, that is my idea, and that is why I, for myself, was willing to yield a great deal. Why, sir, representative men come up here from the State of New York and say, press that one question to break down the barrier at Niagara Falls, and we can carry that in Congress at the present session. That is the position assumed by these gentlemen. And in the language of a friend near me, we will try that once more. We believe that these gentlemen come here in good faith. We believe that they can unite the mass of the State of New York on this simple question—breaking down that barrier. If so, then we will try them once more. We will make one more effort.

Now, that was why I felt constrained to yield up all our cherished measures in the West, and for that reason and that only. I hope I have placed myself right in relation to that other question. That is all I have to say. Let us break down that barrier, cheapen freight, and reach that European market, and you will see a very different state of things among the farmers, and the agriculturalists, and all the inhabitants west of the lakes, including the Mississippi Valley. [Applause.]

Mr. Benedict, of Vermont, supported the adoption of the amendment. He said he did not desire to make a speech upon the subject, but in lieu thereof he read the following letter :

*To the President of the Detroit Commercial Convention :*

SIR—I have been appointed by the Board of Trade of Burlington to attend the convention to be held in Detroit, to consider the subject of opening water communication from the Mississippi to the Atlantic seaboard. I have given to this subject a good deal of attention, and I deem it the great question of the time. The prosperity of the East and West depends more upon securing cheaper transport of the products of the country than upon any other thing; and the question is: How can this best be accomplished? The plan of connecting the Mississippi River with Lake Michigan, by canal, is a proper matter for Congress to act upon, and the subject is now before Congress. I am satisfied that to connect this with the Niagara Ship Canal on the New York side will be likely to defeat the whole plan, and defer the construction of the Fox River Canal. If a canal should be made on the east side of the Niagara, it will be of small value, unless a canal shall be opened, of the same capacity, from Oswego to Albany.

Should the United States provide for the Niagara Canal, it will be understood to pass gunboats in the event of war, and Canada will not be likely to permit this to be connected with Lake Champlain by way of the St. Lawrence River. The most feasible, best and cheapest route, and



one which will accommodate the greatest amount of business, is by way of the Welland Canal, St. Lawrence River and Lake Champlain.

The Welland Canal is 28 miles long, with 27 Locks and 330 feet of lockage. This canal can be enlarged to accommodate steam propellers of 1,000 tons for about \$3,500,000. This will enable vessels to pass from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario, and thence into the St. Lawrence River down to Caughnawaga, at the head of Lachine Rapids, nine miles above Montreal, without the use of the St. Lawrence canals on down trips, using those canals on the up trips only, thus securing an open and free lake and down-stream navigation from Port Dalhousie to Caughnawaga, 340 miles. A canal of the same capacity can be constructed from Caughnawaga to Lake Champlain, distance  $29\frac{1}{2}$  miles, and with less than  $39\frac{1}{2}$  feet of lockage, for \$2,500,000. Lake Champlain furnishes free navigation 150 miles from St. Johns to Whitehall. New England will draw its supplies of Western produce from Lake Champlain. During the years 1848 to 1868 the Welland Canal has been open, on an average, 21 days each year longer than the Erie Canal.

The present Champlain Canal connects Lake Champlain with tide-water at Troy; length, 63 miles; lockage, 96 feet. Competent engineers, who have examined this route, are of the opinion that this can be enlarged from Whitehall to Fort Edward, and from thence by dams in the Hudson River to Troy, to accommodate propellers of the same capacity as above named, for the sum of \$5,000,000. Thus a steam propeller carrying 40,000 bushels of wheat, or its equivalent in flour, can load on Lake Michigan or Superior, or (with the Fox River canal built) on the Mississippi River, and go through to Lake Champlain, or New York, without breaking bulk. The time required to run these propellers from Chicago or Duluth to Burlington, distance 1,471 miles and 1,475 respectively, is 6 days and 12 hours; from Burlington to New York, 300 miles, say 2 days and 12 hours. From Chicago or Duluth to New York nine days. It now takes nine days to pass through the Erie canal from Buffalo to Albany, and I am informed that during the season when transportation is most pressing the great number of boats required to pass the locks causes such delays that it often takes 20 days.

By the way of Welland Canal and Lake Champlain, from Chicago to Burlington, we can secure a passage of 1,000 ton propellers at a cost of \$6,000,000, with 1,424 miles free lake and river navigation, and only 57 miles of taxed canal navigation, and with only 359 feet of lockage. And from Burlington to New York, 300 miles, with free open lake and down stream navigation, 237 miles, and only 63 miles of taxed canal navigation, and only 96 feet of lockage.

The present Erie canal has a lockage of  $2,675\frac{1}{2}$  feet, and its length is 363 miles from Buffalo to Albany, its capacity 210 tons. From Chicago or Duluth to New York via the Erie Canal is 1,507 miles, of which 1,447

are free open lake and down stream navigation, and 63 miles of taxed canal navigation with a lockage of 675 $\frac{1}{2}$  feet.

The distance from Oswego to Albany is about 205 miles. The reported time for transportation by water from Chicago to Albany, exclusive of transshipment at Buffalo, is about 15 days at the present time. This time can no doubt be somewhat shortened by an improved class of boats between Chicago and Buffalo. The Welland Canal and the St. Lawrence-Lake Champlain route will accommodate the business of the Canadas, especially the vast lumber trade, and will secure commercial strength to construct and support the work. I have reason to believe that the Dominion of Canada would enlarge the Welland Canal and the locks on the St. Lawrence canals, and either construct the Caughnawaga or grant facilities for doing the same, and have the right to use the same by citizens of the United States secured upon proper terms by treaty, which should provide for a just reciprocity of trade. I understand that up to the close of navigation this year the charges for transferring wheat from Chicago or Milwaukee to the Champlain Valley was 30 cents a bushel. I venture the assertion that with the Welland Canal enlarged, and the Caughnawaga Canal finished, wheat can be transported from Lakes Michigan or Superior for 10 cents a bushel, and pay remunerative tolls, and the carrier a fair compensation.

The cost of transportation by water depends upon the size of the cargo. The larger the cargo the cheaper the cost of transportation. Open sea navigation with 3,000 tons costs less than one mill a ton per mile for transportation. I do not wish to discuss the advantages of water transport over rail for coarse products. The charges on the East and West railroads have enabled many of them to double their capital stock within the last few years and pay large dividends on the whole. This is a tax either upon the producer by reduction of price on his produce at home, or upon the consumer.

The Erie Canal, loosely and extravagantly as it has been managed, up to 1866, has more than paid for itself with seven per cent. interest on its cost and all repairs, expenses of operation and waste. Up to and including 1866, the aggregate cost of the Erie and Champlain Canals, including cost and maintenance, and legal interest on the cost of construction and maintenance, was \$154,000,218 96, and the aggregate income from the same during the same period, with interest on the same, was \$192,455,779 57, leaving a balance in favor of the State, after paying for the canal and cost of repairs and maintenance, and interest on the same, of \$38,455,560 61. So it is evident that the tolls on the Erie canal, while they greatly relieve the people of that State in the matter of taxes, are unnecessarily burthensome upon others.

Passenger and mercantile traffic will always bear the same ratio to produce traffic. The produce traffic from the West will be in proportion to the cost of transportation. If wheat can be transported from the West to the seaboard for from 12 to 15 cents per bushel, it can command the

markets of England and France. If it costs 25 or 30 cents, it cannot be exported. The amount of grain which the West can produce depends upon the market for it, and the growth of the country depends upon the productiveness of labor.

I am respectfully yours,

LEVI UNDERWOOD.

BURLINGTON, December 9, 1871.

#### GENERAL DISCUSSION.

A general discussion then ensued, upon the merits of the original report and the amendment, as follows :

#### REMARKS OF MR. KING, OF OHIO.

MR. PRESIDENT :—This amendment to the report of the committee is offered by the delegation from Ohio. They considered it in the committee, and they deemed it due to the Dominion of Canada that such an expression of this convention go forward to the world. Our government is so wide, and has so many diverse interests to protect, that it is almost impossible for them to protect any one locality, and we have availed ourselves of the facilities furnished by the Dominion of Canada to relieve us from embarrassment in the transportation of our produce.

The last season shows conclusively that all the American avenues of transportation owned by our government and our citizens have been taxed to more than their capacity, and a reference to the cost of transportation in May, June, July and August, shows that the price of freight upon those avenues was advanced some 15 per cent. Now, what we want is, if we cannot have this action upon the part of our American Government in furnishing us the facilities we need for the present and the future, that we can avail ourselves of the friendly feeling that exists toward us on the other side of the line.

We have a partiality for our own people, but we have no issue, we have no jealousy, and we recognize their rights, if they will answer our purposes, and it is only necessary for the Americans to show that they have been a benefit to us, by looking to the fact that we have poured into them at Collingwood by propellers, from Chicago, we have poured into them at Port Sarnia by propellers, from the West, we have poured into them across the river here the products of four important lines of railroads; we have poured into them at Buffalo property for transportation, and we are pouring into them by railroad trains hourly at Suspension Bridge; we have poured into them at Kingston, and we are pouring into them at Montreal, the produce of the great West. Having availed

ourselves of these advantages, I think it due to them that they be recognized by this convention as a mark of courtesy if nothing more, that we are connected in our interests.

## REMARKS OF DANIEL G. FORT, OF NEW YORK.

I desire to say a few words upon this resolution. In the first place I wish to call the attention of the Convention to some errors in the letter that has just been read. The Governor tells us he is going to show a map of the canals of the State of New York. If the map is no more accurate than his figures then I should prefer furnishing the map myself. The Niagara Ship Canal, instead of being twenty miles long, is but six miles in length. I will not discuss, however, the subject of the letter.

I am opposed to the resolution offered by Mr. King, of Toledo, or at least to its being incorporated as a part of these resolutions. If the Convention desires to endorse his resolution I would much rather it would be passed as a separate resolution, and not as appended to this. I would not go to Congress with a resolution saying that we are begging Canada to assist us; when we appeal to the Congress of the United States we should appeal to them for what we want them to do, and I would not put a threat in there or even a word, saying that we are begging Canada to do something, if Congress would not. The West in relation to this subject is peculiarly situated. In the first place they are a great ways from market. This is a fact they may as well look in the face first as last—that the products they have for sale must be transported a long distance to find a market. In the next place the products of the West are bulky, and they require a large amount of transportation. Now, in our State, in fact in the United States, the Northern States especially, we are running wild on the question of railroads. Railroads are well enough, and they are good things to have, but it is perfectly idle for the West to look to railroads to carry its produce to market. Chicago, I think, has six railroads leading to the East, and with all the influence that these railroads can bring to bear, they have not the power, when the lake transportation closes, to prevent the freights from going right up upon them and doubling and trebling sometimes, compared with what they are in the summer.

There are locked up in the Erie Canal to-night, in the State of New York, about 400,000,000 bushels of grain. An average sized canal boat carries 7,000 bushels of wheat, and an average sized freight train carries just about the same amount. Take the Central Railroad, in the State of New York, and let them begin upon the first day of January and deliver eight trains per day at tide-water, and let all your produce just now in your storehouses in the West remain there, and let them devote all their time and all their power to empty the Erie Canal of grain that is now frozen in, and it will take them until the 20th of March to complete the work.

In the spring the canal will open, and in three days every bushel of it will be at tide-water. So it is perfectly idle to talk about getting the help which you want from railroads. Railroads are good, but they can't do your work.

Let me call your attention to another thing. There is an idea at the West that it would be a very fine thing to load a vessel at Milwaukee, Chicago or Duluth, and unload it at Liverpool. Now, that reads well upon paper, but the best argument I can bring against it is the one that God Almighty himself made, and that is, that vessels that will draw the water that they are required to upon these lakes and which you can use in the canals, will not profitably run upon the ocean. You may take a cargo and load it upon a vessel at Duluth and unload it at Liverpool. Such things have been done; they may be done again; but every time they have been done they lost money to the man that owned the vessel, and every time they are done there will be the same result. Why is it?

You can draw in passing over the St. Clair Flats but about ten feet of water, you can draw through the Welland Canal about the same, but the ocean vessels draw from eighteen to thirty feet; and what have you got to make it up with? nothing but a center board that you drop down in the center of the vessel.

Now, I am in favor of the adoption of the resolutions that were brought in by the committee. I was a member of that committee, supported the resolutions, and I have risen here to-night to support them. Some gentlemen here, the Chairman of this Convention, the Chairman of our Committee on Resolutions, and others, anxiously desired to have this Convention endorse something west of us—the Fox River improvement, and others. The gentleman who was just upon the floor is anxious to have this Convention endorse the building of a canal through Canada territory, from Lake Champlain to the River St. Lawrence. I am opposed to both these projects, and I will tell you why. I am not opposed to improvements, but I believe that we have one thing which should be done at this time, which requires all the effort that we can possibly bring to bear upon it, and I don't believe in scattering our strength. You may make the connection from Lake Champlain to the St. Lawrence River, and it would be perfectly useless unless you have the Niagara Ship Canal. You may go on with the Fox River improvement and the other improvements at the West, but they would be perfectly useless unless you have the Niagara Ship Canal. East and West are both united upon the latter project, but the moment you come West there is a diversity of interest. Chicago wants her Illinois Canal, Wisconsin wants her canal, Minnesota wants hers, and here we stand, divided upon these questions. You go East and it is just the same. We will give you our united strength upon the Niagara Ship Canal, but the moment you commence to talk of improvements West the delegates will be divided. Whatever else we have, we must have that canal, or all other improvements are worthless; and I stand up here to-night in this convention to advocate

it as I advocated it in the other room, and I urge this convention to concentrate our efforts upon one thing.

One of the resolutions asks Congress to adopt a liberal policy towards all these improvements between the East and West, but the tenor of the report of the committee is, that this convention concentrates all the power it can bring to bear upon Congress to complete the Niagara Ship Canal, and I believe the policy of this convention is that upon that question, and upon that question alone, we bend our energy and our efforts so that some good possibly may come from it.

A gentlemen in the committee room this afternoon stated that the Fox River improvement was a private enterprise and had proven worthless in private hands, and they were trying to foist it upon the government. I don't know anything about the merits of the case. I am willing to believe it is a matter of great public interest, but I ~~say~~ don't let us fasten upon the Niagara Ship Canal anything about which such words can be said. All are interested in this Niagara Ship Canal and upon that let us bend our energies—on that let us stand or fall.

#### REMARKS OF GEN. SIBLEY, OF MINNESOTA.

MR. PRESIDENT.—In making the report of the committee this afternoon I had occasion to advert to some arguments which the gentleman from New York has just used, and stated the preponderance of influence in that committee was against what I consider the special interests of the West. I have now a few words to say in reply to the gentleman from New York. As I understand it, the West has not come here to ask for anything which is local in its character. No enterprise has been spoken of, that I know of, in that committee, or by members of this convention from the West, which has anything of a private character in connection with it, or which is not national in the broadest sense. Now, sir, what did we propose this afternoon, in that committee? Simply that the influence of this convention should be thrown in favor of certain measures, which were vital to the prosperity of the extreme Northwestern States. In the first place, Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin are particularly interested in an enterprise in which every other Northern State has also a direct interest. I refer now to the enlargement of the canal at the Sault St. Marie, or the construction of another canal of larger capacity. Gentlemen who have not visited and do not know what is going on in the way of settlement in the extreme Northwest, cannot even picture in imagination the necessities they require at the hand of the general government, that those facilities shall be not only enlarged, but I venture to assert that in the space of five years they will have to be enlarged ten-fold, in order to meet the necessities of the great region that is now being peopled with extraordinary rapidity, and which is bound to be the granary of the world.

Take my own State of Minnesota, a new State, not yet twenty years old, with an area larger than any other State east of the Rocky Mountains, excepting Texas, with nearly 54,000,000 acres of arable land, and up to this time not 3,000,000 acres of that vast area are under cultivation, yet pouring out year after year more millions of bushels of wheat than can be transported, except at a great sacrifice, to the sea-board. There is the great State of Iowa, pouring out millions upon millions of bushels of wheat, upon every one of which bushels an extra freight is to be paid from ten to twenty cents a bushel, making it an enormous burden upon all the agricultural interests of those great States. It is the same with Illinois to a great extent.

Now, sir, the Wisconsin River improvement has been adverted to in a somewhat invidious manner to-night, and it was in the committee. That is no private improvement. It is no scheme. It is an enterprise in which the three States I have mentioned have a vital and an absolute interest, which cannot be ignored, and which will not be ignored. If ignored by this convention, it will not be ignored by Congress. It so, unfortunately, happens for the States of Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa, that this enterprise was in private hands, and it has been held to the detriment of all those States until now, and under the existing law of Congress arbitrators were appointed to make an award, which the Government should pay to this company, to get it out of this position in which it is placed, in order that it might revert to the General Government, and that a great work, so necessary to the interests of all these States, should be completed. That award has been made by the arbitrators, appointed conjointly and mutually. The sum of \$325,000 only is required to extricate that great enterprise from the embarrassment in which it is now placed. The object is to get it back into the possession of the Government, that the Government may go on and make that improvement, so that we can take from the Mississippi to Lake Michigan for five cents a bushel of grain that now costs fifteen cents a bushel to transport. I ask if gentlemen can stand up here and say that is not an object worthy of their attention and consideration.

There are other enterprises of the same kind which affect other States, to which I shall not advert now. I simply wanted to show these gentlemen who have argued so strangely that it was only necessary to break down this barrier at Niagara Falls, that we were exceedingly unreasonable because we attempted to obtain the influence of this convention in favor of their enterprise. I only want to show them that they were entirely mistaken in the object of these members who brought this subject before them.

Now I think we are all in favor of a canal around the Falls of Niagara; and we men in the extreme West, who represent the extreme Western interest, are very much in the position of a man who may be invited to a feast by another man, who denied him the privilege of getting there. That is the way in which we are now situated. This enter-

prise is very well if it is connected with other enterprises which will enable us to reach it ; but suppose that enterprise were to be successful, and suppose the canal is built — what good is it to be to us, if we can't reach it—if you deprive us of the mode of getting there by water communication? All we ask is, that we shall have the opinion of this convention to enable us to achieve certain objects which we consider vital to our prosperity—a very modest request, certainly. I don't suppose that a gentleman here would insist that this convention had met from all parts of the country for the single purpose of aiding the gentlemen from New York to make a canal around the Falls of Niagara. I supposed that this Convention had a broader field in view; that the object was to support and lend its influence to favor a project which I advance, the great interests of transportation from the Valley of the Mississippi to the seaboard; and, as I understand it, we have brought forward no scheme, as the gentlemen term it—we have advanced no argument in favor of anything which is local in its character; but, on the contrary, as I asserted before, there has not been a single proposition advanced which has not been broad and National in its character, as much so as that advocated by the gentleman from New York.

I do hope we shall obtain a full and free vote upon this proposition before we adjourn; and if we are voted down, we will submit very cheerfully. [Applause.]

## REMARKS OF J. R. OSBORNE, OF OHIO.

MR. PRESIDENT—I have an amendment to offer before a vote is taken, but I beg to say in behalf of the delegates from Ohio, in regard to this matter, that I feel very much like reminding the gentleman of an anecdote of our late lamented President, that he was never in the habit of crossing a river until he got to it. I feel very much so in regard to the Fox River improvement. Situated as we are respecting the commercial interests and the growing interests that we represent here, we have no objection to the consideration of any scheme of Western improvement that will tend to the development of the transit of produce in the most expeditious manner possible; and if this proposed canal, or any other canal of that kind is one of these things that should be considered in a convention such as this, I shall never hesitate giving it a careful consideration. The committee, however, have seen fit not to report upon it. Either in the resolution, or in the course of the discussion here, it has been suggested that New York, either through State pride, or controlled by the commercial influence of Buffalo and its line of canals, will oppose obstacles to the Government in the construction of this canal. I am not prepared to say that the Government, under the power which it has under the Constitution to regulate the commerce between the States, might not, without asking the consent of New York, do such an act; and yet we know very well that our Government does not undertake even to build



a courthouse in any State, or to do any other act, unless it be to construct such a road as the Cumberland road in olden times, without asking the consent of the State and obtaining territory for that purpose.

In Toledo to-day we are suffering such a blockade from the overwhelming amount of freight that is arrested from want of transportation, that every one of our business men feels that his interests and the interests of the entire country which is tributary to them, are suffering from the state of things as they exist there. We have had no opportunities, and the country—growing as rapidly as it has—has had no opportunities for the transportation of this bulky freight to which allusion has been made, by means of water communication.

I wish to correct the statistics of the gentleman from New York. It may be the canal boat will carry as much as a train of cars, but a canal boat moves at the rate of two miles an hour, and a train of cars moves twelve miles an hour, and that will make a difference with regard to the facility of getting it off; and the day is advanced too far, and our experience is too great to ignore the fact that the railroad is, of necessity, and in the event of the blocking up of the means of transportation by water, the great carrying agent for all the bulky freight during half the year. But, sir, the proposition which is now before the convention, and which is so well supported by the letter of the ex-Governor of Vermont, in his data, it seems to me is well worthy of the most earnest consideration. I do not see any opposition to the resolution announced. But this is the fact. The resolutions reported by the committee are predicated upon a simple proposition—that Congress shall aid us in the work. Congress is beset on this subject by the most stern opposition that can be brought, in the shape of the great cost of the improvement, and in the shape of opposition that is to come from the united influence of New York.

Now, Congress is not going to pass this resolution and Congress is not going to build this canal. What little we have seen upon the subject, the well known fears of every one in connection with it, and the long letter which we heard read to-day, from that octogenarian, are sufficient evidence that we go with a forlorn hope, with an executive committee or any other influence we may bring to bear, knocking at the doors of Congress to aid us in this respect. We will have far more and better prospects in applying to that large-hearted liberality which has been evinced here by these Canadian gentlemen in getting an enlargement of the Welland Canal for this purpose than we may expect from the American Congress building a canal on the American side [applause], and I believe it is the duty of this Convention, assembled for this purpose—we feel it at all events—we who represent the half-way transportation interests—we feel that we are asking only a fair representation of our interests in saying that we appeal to the Canadian Government, if our appeals in the first instance to the American Government shall prove fruitless. We go knocking first at the doors of Congress. We ask from

our Government protection to our own interests, but if knocking in vain, and knocking again, we shall be repulsed, we then turn to a foreign source, and ask that the \$6,000,000 which it will cost to enlarge their canals may be used, in order that they may prove the highway of nations, as their great St. Lawrence is.

For the purpose of stating my amendment—rather in phraseology than otherwise—I would move to amend the resolution before it is adopted, by saying, instead of the expression, “that in the event the American Government or the State of New York shall interpose obstacles,” it read, “In the event the American Government failing to effect, or the State of New York interposing any obstacles to the ship canal on the American side, we appeal to the Canadian Government.”

## REMARKS OF GEORGE I. POST, OF OHIO.

I want to say first, by way of reply to the last speaker in regard to the action of the State of New York, or the supposed action of that State in opposing obstacles to the Niagara Ship Canal, that an effort was made in the Legislature three or four years ago, and I participated myself in that effort. The consent was obtained in both branches of the Legislature, and in the Assembly, the more popular branch, by a very large majority. The measure then went to the Senate and was somewhat amended, and in the hurry of the last few days of the session it was not called up for ratification in the Assembly; so that it does not appear in the Legislative acts as a consent of the State. But to all intents and purposes consent was obtained, and obtained, on the whole, by a large majority. Now, I say this by way of answer to the obstacles that the gentleman fears may be interposed by the State of New York to the construction of the Niagara Ship Canal. Buffalo is not all there is of the State of New York, nor is the city of New York all there is of that State. I have but little doubt that favorable action can be obtained from the State of New York if it should be required. When the matter was under discussion the last time that it passed, it was when Mr. Littlejohn was a member of Congress, some few years ago. A suggestion was made by one of the Senators—Senator Morgan—then representing New York in the Senate of the United States, that the consent of the State of New York should be obtained. Mr. Morgan was elected to the Legislature of the State, and it was while he was a member there that this action to which I have referred was had. It may require some effort, doubtless will require an effort, on the part of the friends of the Niagara Ship Canal, to get the consent of the State; but I don't believe the issue will be a very doubtful one.

Now, in regard to some remarks made by the gentleman from Minnesota, in reference to being invited to a feast here. Mr. President, we were invited to a feast, and we were invited to come here by Western men. As I understand it, this Convention originated in the West. Circulars

and printed papers containing the action of a great many commercial bodies, in the West as well as in the East, but particularly in the West, show that this was a movement that had its origin in the West; and we read in those papers also that some large commercial bodies in the West, for instance, the Boards of Trade of Chicago and Milwaukee, who must exercise a powerful influence in any legislation they may propose, suggest that the action of this Convention should be confined to the single issue of the construction of the Niagara ship canal. In the spirit of that proposed business to which we were invited, we supposed we had a right to accept it upon the terms proposed in the papers that were sent us. We have come here to meet the West. Now, sir, I happen to have the honor of being a member of the committee which presented these resolutions. The resolutions were offered proposing these different local improvements in the West. The friends of them claimed that they were not national. We met them with this argument, that we would like to have those improvements made, but we regarded them as substantially local improvements. We would like to have an enlarged communication with Lake Superior, because we take a deep interest in the development of the agricultural regions that lie west of Duluth, and we take a deep interest in the development of the mineral regions east of the great lakes; but they are already very comfortably situated for the business they carry on, although it is claimed (but I never heard it before) that their facilities are not sufficiently ample for their present business, and that it is increasing constantly. We were also informed in the same breath that the General Government was now expending money on the improvement referred to. We all understand that these river and harbor bills, appropriating two or three or four millions of dollars, are obtained at every session of Congress, and I was happy to learn that some portion of the public bounty was being bestowed upon an object so worthy.

Then, again, we were informed with regard to the other improvement that we thought was somewhat local, but which, of course, we have an interest in seeing completed, because all the improvements in the West are constantly bringing freight over our lines of transportation; but we learn also in regard to that, that the General Government is already negotiating with private parties in interest there. I think it is as well for us to come to the conclusion, from all that has been said upon the subject, that we may leave it to stand upon its own merits, in the hands of its own friends, who are abundantly able to take care of it, without coupling it with the matter of the Niagara Ship Canal, which is, of all the public improvements that have been suggested in Congress or out of Congress during the last 20 years, or since the laying of the corner-stone of our Government, the most national in its character.

Now, sir, we have come up here from New York in the spirit of reciprocity. We are pretty modest down there; we have learned modesty; we concede greatness to the West, commercial and political greatness; we are almost inclined to think at times that some facts which we sup-

posed existed there, after all may not exist, and that there is little left but the West; but I can tell all these Western friends that the coal tonnage alone of Pennsylvania exceeds all the grain tonnage of their great and mighty West; and I can tell them another fact, that single railroads in the State of Pennsylvania carry from year to year a greater tonnage than the entire grain tonnage that is drawn on the lakes,—and I understand that to be more than a hundred million bushels a year. Heretofore, I understand very well, that the business upon the Great Lakes has originated in the West. We do not claim to have had much part in that. But, Mr. President, the temporary chairman of this convention, the Governor of this State, called the attention of the convention particularly to the great effect of the construction of the Erie Canal upon the prosperity of a portion of the West, for before that it was a wilderness. I must confess, that while I am no great advocate of the Erie Canal, the spirit in which this has been discussed, not in the convention but in the other room, has left some unpleasant thoughts in my mind. Now, sir, what I was going to say was this: We have some freight upon the southeast basin of Lake Ontario, and I ventured this assertion this evening at the hotel while taking tea, that in less than fifteen years, and indeed, I may say that in less than half that time, there will be as many tons of freight on the southeast basin of Lake Ontario to go West, as of freight on any one or any two of the Western Lakes to go East, and that principally of anthracite coal; because to-day the Delaware & Hudson Coal Company, the Delaware & Tonawanda Coal Company, the Lehigh Valley Coal Company, all great companies, are already on the southeast basin of Lake Ontario with their transportation.

Looking over a report of the Board of Trade of the city of Chicago, I find in '69 there were 575,000 tons carried to that city in a single year. Now we want to give Duluth that, we want to give Milwaukee that. Now as to these lines across New York and Pennsylvania from the coal fields, already six or seven are constructed or are in process of construction connecting the coal fields of Pennsylvania and the great cities of Philadelphia, New York and Boston. Now we claim a co-interest with the West. We think they are quite as much interested as we are. We, while we are not rich, do not talk as much of our poverty as they do in the West, we do not talk as much about suffering as the West. Why, it is claimed here that the farmers can barely make a living for want of cheap transportation.

Now, we have come here to assist the West. We supposed the West had always been anxious for the construction of the Niagara Ship Canal, and we came up here to say that we are not only ready to provide new channels, construct new roads, but are going to bring important freight; we have an interest stronger than ever before to break down this barrier between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario.

Now, Mr. President, it seems to me that the idea in these resolutions to throw out a threat, or if not a threat something in the nature of a

request, or rather a complaint, in case we make our application to our Government in vain, then to go begging to Canada for the means of getting this western produce to market, is not quite the proper thing.

We ought to have a canal on our own soil. There are at least sixteen States of our Union already organized, States in New England the States of New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio, and the States west of Ohio, that are directly interested in the construction of this Niagara Ship Canal.

A word more in regard to these suggestions of uniting in the effort to build this canal. As to these Western measures, it occurred to us in New York that we might with as much propriety do what would be hooted at by the West, ask that the General Government should turn in and assist the State of New York in building a great ship canal entirely across the State, or if that was thought too much, that we should join hands and assist in the construction of a canal from Oswego to the Hudson. I am prepared to believe that the West would not be willing to join us in any such undertaking, and it seems to me they ought not to ask us to join them in any one of their local improvements. Why, it is a matter of history, when the State of New York was as poor as the West is to-day, immediately after the close of the war, when the country was poor, the State of New York asked for aid to construct the Erie canal. How was DeWitt Clinton, originator of that canal, an improvement to the State of New York and also to the West, met by the President? He was told that he was a hundred years ahead of his time. The petitions were not listened to for a single moment, and Mr. Clinton returned home. The State relied upon her own resources. It is national in its object. It has been of great national value in my judgment. But to-day we want the Niagara Ship Canal. We want to make use of these great natural waters where we have no tolls to pay from the head waters of Lake Superior to the foot of Lake Ontario, and then if you Western men can utilize Niagara River and export produce to Liverpool direct, God speed you, we have no objections. If we cannot offer sufficient inducements to take your produce East, then go where you can get the best market. I am sure you will do that, and that is right.

Since arriving in this city and conversing with some Western men I feel a good deal encouraged.

We had known all along the difficulties we had to encounter in the State of New York; we understand full well the influence of Buffalo and the Erie canal, the influence in New York. I know what influences we have to battle with, and believe that we are prepared to battle with them successfully, if you will give us ground to stand upon, if you will give us the Niagara Ship Canal alone; go before Congress, the State of New York and the country with that, and I am not too sanguine in saying the effort will be successful. [Applause.]

## REMARKS OF JOHN BURT, OF MICHIGAN.

I shall not attempt to make many remarks, but from the course the discussion has taken I feel that it imperatively devolves upon me to say something upon this great and important question. I regret very much that differences should have arisen in this convention between the East and West; I regret that perfect harmony could not prevail here upon this one great and important subject—the opening of navigation to the seaboard by breaking down that great barrier that has been mentioned—the Niagara Falls; and I am very much surprised to find gentlemen advocating the enlargement of the Canadian Canal, or rather the Welland Canal. It is well known that the Canadian Government does not contemplate or expect to enlarge that canal beyond a draft of 12 feet of water, while the draft already provided for and being opened up on the lakes now considered is to be 14 feet of water. It is well known that it is impracticable to build a canal on the line of the present Welland Canal while we need the use of it, as has been referred to before. Even if it could be done, what shall we lose while the Canadian canal is being built? We thank the Canadian Government for what it has done; but shall commerce be stopped from that important channel? It is well known that rocky barriers extend into Lake Erie thousands of feet, and under the land on the shore, and many miles would have to be removed in order to deepen it to 14 feet of water, and should it be done it would cost more than to build the Niagara Canal as proposed. We understand that from recent explorations they can avoid this rocky barrier by commencing some distance this side, at Grand River, and thus make that canal some 40 miles in length, which is now some 28 miles in length. But should all this be done they cannot expect to give us the tonnage that we can have by the canal we propose, because we can get any amount of tonnage there. We have abundance of water, and with the same amount of means expended around Niagara Falls we can build a canal that will float ships of 4,000 tons burthen, and shorten the time of transportation some 24 hours. I venture to say the average time between Port Colborne and Lake Ontario will amount to thirty hours at the present time, of passing vessels to and fro, while with the Niagara Canal, built upon the government plan proposed, six miles only in length, or seven at the most, we can pass in six or seven hours at longest, with a tonnage of from one to three thousand tons. Instead of the large ships now being built on our lakes shall we confine ourselves to those of 800 tons, as proposed by the Welland Canal project, and then take thrice the time in passing from Lake Erie into Lake Ontario and pass through foreign territory? Very much has been said here with reference to getting through Congress a bill providing for the construction of the Niagara Canal. I differ from the gentlemen who think we cannot. I think we can by united effort, as proposed by the gentleman who has just taken his seat, get it through Congress, and possibly through the Legislature of New York. We can get the

privilege of building a canal and the means to build it with. The canal around Niagara Falls on the shortest line can undoubtedly be built for perhaps two-thirds the amount, and of greater capacity, than estimated by Col. Blunt. Say a canal that will pass vessels floating 16 feet of water, as far as the construction is concerned, which will be the demand of commerce for time to come—a single arrangement can be constructed so as to pass from the upper level to the lower with 4,000 tons, and in the space of forty minutes. This, of course, is upon a plan which I propose myself. I have submitted the plan to the best engineer ability of the country, and they agree with me, that the canal can be built and a lock constructed, that will pass vessels, six at a time, through the lock in 40 minutes, at a cost of no more than \$9,000,000. Now how will this compare with the Welland Canal, if it is built of the size and on the plan which they propose? We would not take it, if they furnish it and give it to us, if we knew the advantages to be derived from the one on the American side. It seems perfectly preposterous that we should attempt to bring this matter out in the form presented by the gentlemen here tonight, that we cannot depend upon the American Government to build this canal, therefore we turn to Canada. I feel it is a disgrace to the American people, to this convention, to think of or intimate that it is impracticable or impossible to construct a canal on the American side, of such great importance to the American people.

With the rapid development of our resources, the constantly increasing demand for transportation, we want a large canal—we want a canal of sufficient capacity to pass every single hour 6,000 tons. This cannot be done with the Welland Canal, if it could be built as some propose. But it never will be built. The Canadian people look to the American people to build a canal. They say, we are too poor to build a canal. Shall we build Canadian canals, or turn to our own soil and do ourselves the justice and the honor to build ourselves the greatest, the best and most important canal on the American continent, or in the whole world? Cheapen the produce that goes east, and the eastern produce to the west, and you set millions of hands to work in new fields of labor. You will send our grain in greater quantity across the Atlantic, and will thus increase the wealth of the nation.

Gentlemen, I am opposed to the amendment as presented by the gentleman. I feel that we ought to let this resolution stand upon its own basis. Let us go before Congress relying upon our own resources, our own enterprise, and let us not feel dependent upon any foreign power to build our most important canal.

## REMARKS OF G. V. N. LOTHROP, OF MICHIGAN.

Mr. Lothrop, having called for the reading of the report of the Committee, and the amendments offered thereto, spoke as follows :

MR. PRESIDENT.—I asked that those resolutions might be read together, because it struck me that when they should be so read it would be instantly observed that this convention was placing itself in a very peculiar attitude. The resolutions reported from the committee address themselves to the Congress of the United States. They address themselves to that government of which we are citizens. They appeal to that government to perform a national work. To whom is the additional resolution addressed? Is it addressed to the government of the United States? If it is, it is addressed, as it were, *in terrorem* over them—“If you do not do that, we will be naughty.” I do not think we want to say anything of the kind. I hardly think that is the purpose of this Convention. Is it addressed to the government of the Dominion? We are not their subjects, we have no right to address them in that way. If they do this work—enlarge their canals—it will be very acceptable, and very useful to us. They will not do it because asked by any portion of the American Government or the American people to do it. I mean they will not do it as a national work. They will not do it to oblige the people of the United States. They will not do it to advance the interest of the people of the United States as such. They will do it, if they do it all, for commercial considerations which touch their own interest.

Now, Mr. President, this Convention is composed of members representing the various States of the lakes and Valley of the Mississippi, to address our Government and ask them to perform a national duty. They may with great propriety ask them to perform that. They may address themselves with great force to that. We may desire that the Canadian Government should do this for commercial reasons, and if we wish to act upon them in that way, let us show them that we are in earnest in this—that our Government will do this work. If our Government does this work, it withdraws from them some of the commerce they have. They will then be stimulated to perform their work.

Now, how are we going to give the people of Canada aid to do this work? The United States will not do it. The people of New York will not do it. The people of Michigan will not do it; they cannot do it. They have no legal power to do it. What are we asking these gentlemen in Canada to do? We may ask them as individuals and tell them that it is best for commercial considerations that they should build this canal; but I think the best way to do it is to show them that we are going ahead to do this work upon our own side. [Cheers.] If they



desire to share in these commercial advantages, if they desire to control our commerce and our interests within their own border, they will then open their canals, that they may enter into competition with us. If they do not do that, we have no considerations to address to them.

I rose, however, not to discuss this question, because it does not lie in my province. I know very little about commercial matters, but what struck me as peculiar at the outset was the form of these resolutions. One series of resolutions is properly addressed to the Government of the United States. The other, if it is addressed to the Government of the United States, seems to me to be in a very improper shape, and not calculated to accomplish its object. If it is addressed to the Government of Canada, it seems to me equally out of shape.

I will add one other word. I have listened with profound attention to what my brothers of this Convention have said. I have received much instruction. I am very much impressed with the ideas that were suggested by the gentleman from Iowa, who has this matter very much at heart. There is great wisdom, when you are doubtful about your powers, to concentrate all your strength upon the main thing. The ship canal around Niagara Falls is unquestionably a national work. The commerce of these lakes is not under local laws. It is under national laws. The construction of works of this kind has been recognized by the United States. They have built a canal across the St. Clair Flats. No matter that they built it in Canadian waters; we got the treaty of Washington to bring it back under our control. They recognized that it was a national work, and they built it. They recognized still further, that the connection of the great waters of Lake Superior with the St. Mary River was a national work. So the connection of the great waters of Lakes Erie and Ontario are unquestionably National. It is a great work. If we have any doubt about accomplishing all we desire, let us remember that one wedge driven at a time, and struck strongly, will lead the work, and let us concentrate all our energies upon that. [Applause.] There is behind that a great deal to be done, which, that done, will come along of its own weight. Open that great work and let the great commerce of these lakes, already so great and admirable, receive the stimulus of that, and its influence will flow back to the west of us, and open new channels and greater channels for this work being done. The pressure behind us, as great as it is now, will be infinitely redoubled. I hope the amendment will not be pressed, and that the original resolution will [Applause.]

Mr. L. A. Thomas, here appealed to the Ohio delegation to withdraw their amendment. Mr. King, its mover, at first declined, but subsequently acceded to the request.

Mr. C. D. Robinson then moved that the further con-

NATIONAL COMMERCIAL CONVENTION.

sideration of the matter be deferred until Thursday morning, and that the Convention take a recess until that time

The New York and other Eastern delegations announced that they could not remain over.

Gov. Fairchild, having been requested by Mr. Fort to give an expression of his views concerning the question at issue, said :

REMARKS OF GOV. FAIRCHILD, OF WISCONSIN.

The gentleman from New York suggested that he would like to hear the chairman of the Convention. I have no speech to make upon this resolution. If I should make any remarks they would be upon an amendment, and I feel very anxious indeed that this convention should be harmonious; that nothing shall go to the world that we have met here and had serious disagreement. It is not healthful. It will not do good. I don't want it to be done, and neither do you. It is sure I have no personal feeling in the matter. Of course, I, in common with other gentlemen from the far West, have very seriously at heart some improvements, that we know, without any doubt, however any one else may estimate them, are national in their character; as national to the States west of the Mississippi, as is the Niagara Ship-Canal, and of more importance to the States west of the Mississippi River than is the Niagara Ship-Canal. We feel that very strongly. We have been laboring for years to bring about that improvement. We have been laboring for years to get that improvement across the State of Wisconsin out of individual hands. We have reached just the point where we can put our hands upon that improvement. If we lose that improvement this year, we lose it forever; and you lose, and we lose, a sum of money that would be fabulous to mention here. Whatever the Erie Canal is to the East and the West, the Canal across the State of Wisconsin is to the East and West. The commerce over the State is immense, and the commerce over the State in future will be larger still. I don't mean that the commerce is so great now, because it accumulates as it goes East; but it is positively immense, and the several agricultural States west of the Mississippi feel that they ought to urge with all their power upon the National Government to give us that open free highway. We want it. But still, as I said before, as anxious as we feel for it, we don't wish to put any obstacles in the way of any other great improvement. We are in favor of water communication to the East. It is almost of vital importance to the West that we should have it. Our people are roused to it, and there is nothing but a strong feeling in the West for any means of outlet which will come to them, whether it be in favor of taking the Erie Canal and enlarging that by the Government, or of constructing another canal. I

# Headquarters Executive Committee of Niagara Falls Ship Canal,

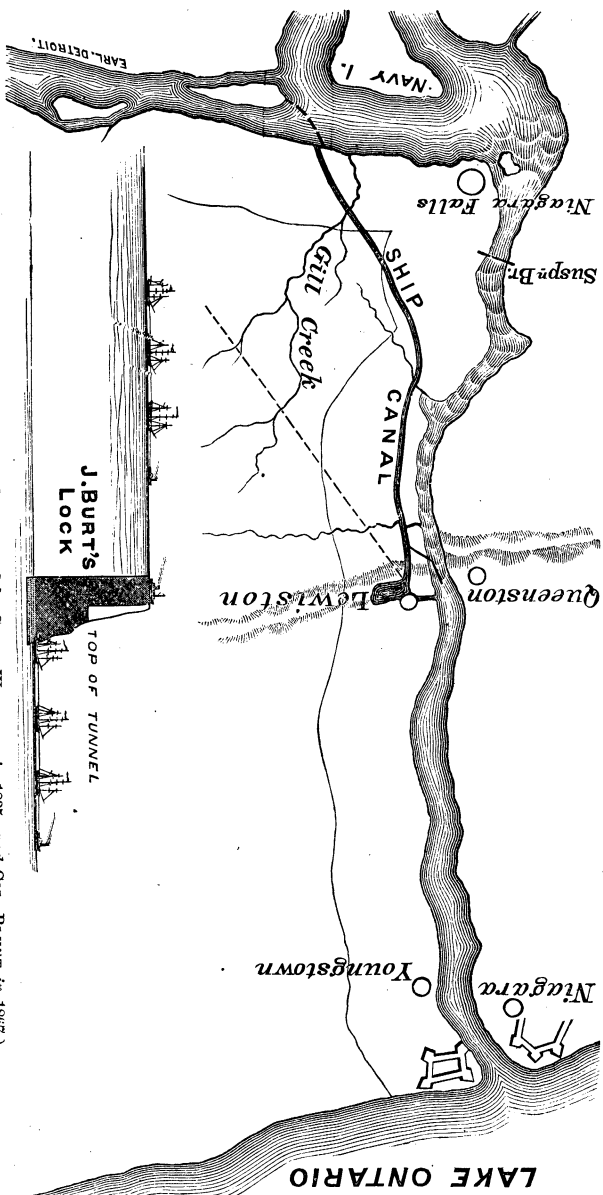
DETROIT, MICHIGAN.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

LEWIS A. THOMAS, Chairman, Iowa.  
JOHN BURT, Sec'y and Treas., Michigan.

CHAS. RANDOLPH, Illinois.  
DANIEL G. FORT, New York.  
GEO. I. POST, New York.

J. H. GRAY, District of Columbia.  
C. D. ROBINSON, Wisconsin.  
RALPH P. BUCKLAND, Ohio.



(Short Line Route, seven miles in length, proposed by CAPT. WILLIAMS in 1858, and COL. BURNETT in 1867.)  
drawn by MR. GRIFFITH, showing the various Canal Routes, and exhibited during the session of the  
ally endorsed and ordered published in the proceedings.